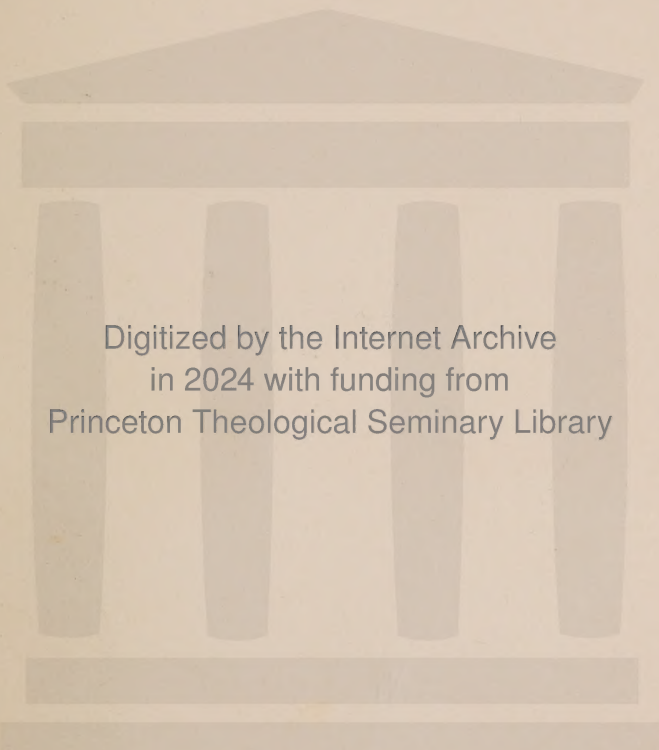


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Christian Doctrine

AND

Systematic Theology

BY

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Preface.

The pages of this volume contain the substance of lectures on Systematic Theology which have been given by the writer, for nearly forty years, to successive classes of students at the Moravian College and Theological Seminary of Bethlehem, Pa. It is the first work of this kind written in the English language by a member of the oldest Protestant Church, founded by the followers of John Hus in 1457. While in no sense an official publication, but entirely independent and personal in its statements and conclusions, it will be found to represent fairly the view-point of the Moravian Church or *Unitas Fratrum*, as to the leading features of Christian Doctrine and Systematic Theology.

Some persons may think it ill advised to publish such a work at this time of theological unrest and of apparently sharp contrasts between traditional and modern theology. But as to all that is really essential in Christian doctrine, it is as timely now as ever, "to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints" (Jude v. 3). The Gospel of Jesus Christ, our blessed Saviour, is as well suited to the needs of the twentieth century of the Christian era as to the first. As for non-essentials, such as denominational distinctions, ecclesiastical formulas, dogmatical definitions and historical criticism, it behooves all honest seekers after the truth, whether they call themselves orthodox or liberal, conservative or advanced, to acknowledge the limitations of our religious knowledge and understanding. For at best "we know in part and we see in a mirror darkly" (I Cor. 13:9, 12). Realizing this truth, we will be prepared to discuss all questions that present themselves in the different departments of Christian doctrine, in the spirit of "charity," without narrow prejudice or assumption of a monopoly of wisdom, taking into consideration, if possible, all the new light which science, history and Christian experience have shed

upon the old established beliefs. The writer claims but little originality. The thoughts and expressions of other men have been freely assimilated and used, and it is not possible to credit them individually. Our guiding principle is the motto of the Moravian Bishop and educator, Comenius: "In essentials unity, in non-essentials liberty, in all things charity."

That the publication of this work may redound to the glory of God and the furtherance of His kingdom, is the earnest wish and prayer of

THE AUTHOR.

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A Compendium of Christian Doctrine and Systematic Theology.

Introduction.

CHAPTER I. THE SCOPE OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE.

The two terms most frequently applied to a comprehensive presentation of Christian doctrine are "Dogmatics," and "Systematic Theology." What is the meaning of these terms?

1. *Dogmatics.*

Dogma ("opinion"), in classical usage, meant a decree issued by a king, a resolution passed by an assembly, or simply a personal opinion, particularly a philosophic conviction or tenet. In the New Testament, the word occurs first for the edict which went out from Caesar Augustus (Luke 2:1). Next it designates the "decree" laid down by the council of the apostles in Jerusalem (Acts 16:4) and the "ordinances" of the Mosaic Law (Eph. 2:15). Since the fourth century of the Christian era, the term has been used almost exclusively for the doctrines of the Christian faith, as professed either by the whole or some branch of the Church. Accordingly dogmatics may be defined to be, the science which treats of the articles of Christian doctrine as expressed in the symbols of the Church.

2. *Theology.*

The word theology ("speaking of God") in the early Christian Church, was used with the special meaning of giving prominence to the divinity of Christ. In this sense John, the Evangelist, and Gregory Nazianzen (A.D. 350), were sometimes designated as "theologians." The term is still employed in a limited sense for that department of

dogmatical teaching which treats of God, his attributes and his works. Peter Abelard (about A.D. 1100), in his treatise "Theologia Christiana" first applied the term to the entire range of Christian doctrine. In the general sense of the word, therefore, "theology" means the science which gives an account of the revelation of God to man and the relation of man to God.

Looking at the sources, from which the facts and truths of theology are derived, it is customary to distinguish between a *natural* and a *supernatural* theology. *Natural* theology deals with the knowledge of God which is gained from natural sources, such as the physical world, secular history, reason and conscience. *Supernatural* theology supplements this general knowledge of the divine government by the special revelation of God which, it claims, has been granted to man. This supernatural theology accepts at the outset certain facts and truths of revealed religion. Some, therefore, raise the objection that the term "science" does not apply to a theology which accepts as true something that has not been properly proven and is, perhaps, incapable of proof. But there is no science which does not build upon some axioms, that must be taken for granted. While it may be admitted, that the exponents of theology have, sometimes, committed the mistake of placing themselves in opposition to the laws of science, by presenting teachings which are contrary to reason, this error does not annul the many evidences, that Christian theology can and does conform to the rules that obtain in the apprehension of scientific truth in general.

3. *Systematic Theology.*

We call it "systematic theology," when the facts and truths, both of natural and revealed theology, are presented in their rational unity and in the form of a doctrinal system. But why should there be any system of theology? If the Christian religion is founded upon faith in the person and the work of Christ, what more is needed than a personal appropriation of this faith?

The need of a system will appear from the following considerations: *a.* There is an innate desire of the human mind to harmonize and to systematize the facts and beliefs which are accepted as true. *b.* These truths cannot be fully understood without a system which connects them in proper order and defines their relation to each other. *c.* A rational understanding makes the faith more sure (“*Credo, ut intelligam.*”). Christians should be able “to give an answer to every man that asketh a reason of the hope that is in them” (1 Pet. 3:15). This is what systematic theology endeavors to accomplish in the presentation of Christian doctrine.

4. *Relation to Other Branches.*

Four other branches of theology are closely related to systematic theology, yet must be distinguished from it. *a. Biblical theology* is that branch of theological study which largely furnishes the foundation for systematic theology. Ignoring any other source of information, it collects the teachings of the different books of the Bible and presents them in proper order. *b. Historical theology* traces the development of Christian doctrine from the time of the Apostles to the present day, showing the changes which it has undergone in different epochs of the Church’s history. *c. Apologetic theology* gives prominence to the evidences of the truth of the Christian religion, which it maintains and vindicates against opposing doubt and error. *d. Symbolism* has regard mainly to the points of difference between the doctrines as held and taught in different denominations, generally with the object of defending the creed of one particular Church.

CHAPTER II. RELIGION.

1. *What is Religion?*

Since theology and Christian doctrine deal with the facts and truths of religion, it is important, first of all, to define what we understand by this word. Religion is not the same

as morality, that is the consciousness of certain fixed principles of right and wrong, good and bad. Morality may exist without religion, even as there exist certain forms of religion without morality. But what is religion? The word has been derived either from the Latin verb "religare," to bind, or from "relegere," to read over, to consider. While the best authorities, from Cicero down to present time, decide in favor of the latter derivation, nevertheless the term religion, as now used, seems to combine the two elements contained in the two verbs, viz: a thinking over and a binding, or *respect* and *dependence*.

Religion is not something that is imparted from without, it is an innate faculty, a consciousness of the existence of a higher power, a feeling of dependence on and a sense of veneration and duty toward that power. We may speak of an unconscious religion as existing and manifesting itself even in the irrational creature, as the Psalmist says: "All the earth doth worship thee, the Father everlasting." But as a conscious faculty, religion is a part of the higher nature of man. Some human beings possess it to a larger, some to a lower degree; in some men it seems to be lacking almost entirely. There is also much unconscious or half-conscious religion among men. It is capable of development and cultivation.

2. *Subjective Aspect of Religion.*

Religion has a twofold aspect, a subjective and an objective one. It requires a subject which stands in relation to the higher power, and a supreme Being, a God, who is the object of religion. Looking at the subjective side, the first question is: What faculty in man is the seat or center of religion? Some philosophers and teachers of religion have sought it exclusively in the *intellect*, the perceptive faculty, declaring a man religious, if he has the right conception of the truth and accepts certain teachings. But this, surely, is a onesided view, to make religion merely a matter of belief or of knowing. Some have made *feeling* the main

test of religion and conclude that a man is religious, if his sentiments are religiously excited, whether this be done by art (especially music), or by human love, or by any other form of emotion or ecstasy. Others are inclined to regard the *will* as the main, if not the exclusive seat of religious energy, making it identical with moral action. "To do right is religion."

But these onesided definitions fail to comprehend the central character of religion which is simply spiritual life. Although, according to the different individual disposition, one or the other function of the soul will be more prominently affected, true religion is not confined to the exercise of any one of the powers of intellect, emotion or will. Religion is the spiritual life of man. It has its seat in the central faculty of man and from there controls all his powers. The most expressive figure for this central faculty of religion is the Biblical term of "*heart*," as used in the Old and New Testaments (Gen. 6:5, Deut. 6:5, Matth. 6:21, Rom. 1:21). The heart, as the center and the motive power of physical life, is a fit symbol for the spiritual principle and center of man's being.

3. *The Object of Religion.*

If the subjective consciousness and energy of religion are to be more than a dream and a self-delusion, there must be a corresponding object of man's reverence and worship, a *divine Being*, towards whom man's religion tends. A religion which denies the existence of God is self-contradictory, because it takes away the very essence of religion, the recognition and worship of the higher power. The exercise of religion presupposes the possibility of communion with God and requires a God who relates himself to man. There may be many different forms of worship and expressions of religion, in words, sentiments and acts, but in order to make these effective, there must be a God to receive this worship.

4. *False Religions.*

Forms of religion which do not come up to this standard, are the following: *a. Pantheism* and nature worship, the religion which holds that the universe is God, that he is identical with the world and has no personal being. *b. Polytheism* and Ancestor worship, that is the belief in the existence of many limited and imperfect Gods. *c. Dualism*, and Devil worship, or the notion that there are two antagonistic principles, with equal claims and both self-existing, viz., mind and matter, the good and the evil. *d. Deism*, or the religion which believes in the existence of God, but of a God who does not concern himself about the world or, at least, who gives no immediate and supernatural revelation of himself. *e. Agnosticism*, the attitude of indifference toward all matters of religion, or else a negation of all possible knowledge concerning God and his relations to man and to the world. *f. Atheism* or Naturalism, which simply denies the existence of God, believes in matter and force only and traces all religion back to mere illusion or the cunning of priests and deceivers.

CHAPTER III. THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.

1. *An axiom of religious truth.*

The great majority of men, whether they be Christians, Mohammedans, Brahmanists, Buddhists or other heathen, believe in the existence of God as the primary article of religion. Wherever men live, in all parts of the world and as far back as we have any historical record, however degraded they may otherwise be, they have some conception of a God or Gods, to whom they pray or whom they dread, and some superstitious ceremony at least, which is intended for worship or to appease the anger and the wrath of the God whom they fear. The literature of all nations begins with the religious element. Although "no man hath seen God at any time," men need not be taught first that there is a God; they know it by intuition, as a self-evident truth. Cicero

declares in *De Natura Deorum*: "*Necesse est esse deos, quoniam insitas eorum vel potius innatas cogitationes habemus*," and the Psalmist calls him a fool who "says in his heart, There is no God" (Ps. 14:1).

2. *Doubt and Denial.*

There are, however, quite a number of thoughtful men, who have no such convictions, who are either indifferent as to the question of the existence of God or who positively deny and scoff at this belief. While there may be few who, strictly speaking, can be called atheists, (as nearly everybody believes in some sort of a Higher Being,) the number of agnostics and of those who reject the idea of a personal God is large. Over against such doubt and denial, is there any absolute evidence obtainable, that will compel universal acceptance? Apparently not. We can prove, however, that the belief in a personal God rests upon facts more reasonable than the denial of his existence. The strongest evidence of this kind, doubtless, is furnished to the Christian believer in the person and work of Jesus Christ and in his own personal experience of the love of God. But there are certain *a priori* arguments, irrespective of the Christian religion, which may serve as a foundation for the general conviction of the Being of God.

3. *The Positive Proof.*

Four main arguments are thus presented: *a. The physical or teleological argument* (Rom. 1:19, 20, Acts 14:17). This is the evidence derived from the order and design of the Universe ("Telos," end). It is evident that there is design in the world. The most skillful work of man does not equal the beauty, order and harmony of the natural organism. The world is constructed according to a distinct plan; the same laws prevail everywhere. In the cocoon of the caterpillar, *e.g.*, the legs, antennae and wings of the future butterfly are all folded up, in preparation for its future life. An unconscious adapting of means to an end is inconceivable. Therefore the world must owe its origin to an allwise creator.

b. *The cosmological argument*, derived from the dependence of every part of the universe on a previous cause. The world around us is contingent; it has a beginning. Everything begun owes its existence to some producing cause. "Evolution" may be the general law of the development of the universe, but it cannot be the cause of existence. Logic requires a first cause, some self-existing Being, who is absolutely independent, eternal and unchangeable.

c. *The anthropological argument*. This argument rests on man's mental and moral nature. We have a sense of right and wrong. The right we know is what we ought to do and the wrong is what we must avoid. *Conscience*, ("the Categorical Imperative" of Kant,) exercises authority over every man and there is a general sense of responsibility. This proves, that there must be a lawgiver and judge. So, likewise, man's emotional nature, his feeling of love and devotion, point to the existence of a Being who is the source of love and who can be the object of human affection.

d. *The ontological or psychological argument* (as given by Anselm and Descartes). Man has an innate idea of an infinitely perfect Being. This Being must have reality. If God did not actually exist, we could conceive of a Being greater than God, because, with other perfections, he would have the attribute of existence. This argument apparently moves in a circle, in that it assumes the existence as necessary, which is the very thing to be proved. To meet this objection, it is urged, that the idea of God is not a voluntary idea, but a necessary conception, so that you cannot get rid of it and therefore it demands a reality to correspond to it.

4. *The Negative Proof.*

If the positive proof for the existence of God in the foregoing arguments is not absolutely conclusive, it will bear comparison with the arguments of the opponents. The latter, unless they declare themselves simply indifferent agnostics, must be either materialists or pantheists. The

materialist's substitute for God is an infinite number of atoms. All existence, rational and irrational, is assumed to be the result of fortuitous combinations of one and the same substance. But such materialism contradicts the testimony of human consciousness. We know that we have a self which thinks, and we feel ourselves morally accountable. *Pantheism* regards the universe as the unconscious evolution of an impersonal mind or substance, which reaches consciousness only in man. The human personality itself is declared to be but a passing moment in the evolution of the infinite, and yet the only personal manifestation of the Godhead. However, this theory again contradicts our innermost conviction of an individual existence and of our responsibility toward a supreme personality.

CHAPTER IV. REVELATION OF GOD.

1. *Need of a Divine Revelation.*

If our belief in God is to be the ground of our religion, we must know more of God than his mere existence. There must be a relationship established between God and man and there can be no such relation, unless God makes it possible by a revelation of himself. (Revelation derived from "relevare," to draw back a veil.) True religion must be taught of God. The idea of religion implies the belief in a divine revelation. This revelation may be *general* or *special*, *natural* or *supernatural*.

Many professed believers in the existence of God admit the natural or *general* revelation, through nature, history and conscience, but deny any *special* revelation or personal communion between God and man. They declare it inconsistent with the idea of God, that he should do anything that would change the natural course of events, as fixed by eternal law. Such interference, they claim, would imply that the world was made imperfect and needed improvement.

a. But a personal God who created the world and did not merely mould it, must be supposed to exercise constant supervision and control, since without his personal support the world could not exist.

b. Furthermore, in the present condition of the human race, at least, the mediate or general revelation of God seems insufficient to evoke and to satisfy true religion. It does not satisfy the longing of the heart after communion with God and, above all, it does not teach the way of salvation.

2. *Actuality of Revelation.*

Our need, therefore, of something more than a knowledge of God which we derive from nature, as well as the general evidence of his love and wisdom, which we have, afford ground for the hope that our intellectual and moral wants will be met by the supply of a special divine revelation. Such revelation, we believe, has been given to mankind at various times and in various ways, which can be classified under the two heads of external or *objective* manifestation and of internal or *subjective* revelation, through testimony born to the human heart and mind.

3. *Objective Evidence.*

We find it recorded, that from the earliest times of human history, God has revealed himself, on special occasions, by supernatural means, such as the appearing of heavenly messengers (angels), by wonderful signs and miracles, by ecstatic visions and dreams that were granted to certain men, and by the light of inspiration in the holy prophets. (Hebrews 1:12.)

a. *Personal Manifestation.* These manifestations culminate in the person and work of Jesus Christ, the God-man, and on the acceptance of this central revelation the reality of previous and later manifestations substantially depends. There can be no reasonable doubt, that Jesus of Nazareth did claim to be the "Son of God," to have come from God for the purpose of revealing the will of his Father and to be

the Saviour of men. He was crucified for that claim, and his disciples, after his resurrection and ascension, made it the pillar of their proclamation. The influence which proceeded from the belief in Christ's divinity has not only continued to this day to conquer all opposition, but has proved highly beneficial in making men holier and happier. The conclusion is reasonable, that God has revealed himself, first of all, in a supernatural manner, in the man Jesus Christ.

b. Prophecy. Another form of special divine revelation is that given through prophecy. There have been among many nations, but especially among the Hebrews, "prophets," that is men who claimed to be inspired of God and to bring a direct message from him. Among the predictions recorded as coming from these prophets, some have had such a remarkable fulfillment, that the foreknowledge of the future proves the fact of a special revelation accorded to these prophets; such as the prophecies concerning the Messiah, the judgment and the restoration of Israel, the destiny of the surrounding nations, the future of the Christian Church, etc.

Other objective evidences of the reality of a supernatural divine manifestation are found in the miracles recorded in the Bible, in the exalted character and contents of the Holy Scriptures in general, and in the wonderful history of the Christian Church.

4. *Subjective Evidence.*

The external or objective evidence is supplemented and strengthened by the inner testimony of *practical experience* and *rational conviction*. In order to become fully convinced of the reality of the divine revelation, we must enter into that personal communion with God, through the Holy Spirit, which is promised to the Christian believer. The personal *experience* of divine grace, of prayers answered, of hearts and lives changed—that is the surest evidence that can be given. And what, at first, is a matter of faith, becomes more and more also a matter of *rational conviction*.

The facts and truths of revealed religion satisfy the demands of sound thinking and appear as an organic whole, in which each part supports the other.

CHAPTER V. THE BIBLE AS THE STANDARD OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE.

1. *Need of a Standard.*

As the natural revelation of God in the physical world is continuous, so likewise his supernatural manifestation is not confined to any particular time and place. Hence the facts and truths of revealed religion are not limited to Bible times and the Bible is not the exclusive record or the only source of divine revelation. The Christian Church existed before the New Testament was written; and God revealed himself to the patriarchs and to the children of Israel long before the books of the Old Testament were composed. There has been a continued divine revelation also given to men, both direct and indirect, since the Canon of the Bible was closed.

However, in as much as this revelation of God has one great *historical center* in the person and work of Jesus Christ, we need a reliable record of that central revelation, upon which our salvation depends. Our knowledge of the words and deeds of Christ, our Saviour, must not rest on uncertain traditions, but upon the testimony of reliable witnesses. Hence the record given in the *four Gospels* is of primary importance because of the great facts and truths which they transmit to us. The other parts of the Bible are of value, mainly, as far as they are connected with this central revelation. The history of Israel, the law and the prophets, form the preparation for the time of Christ; the book of Acts and the New Testament Epistles show us the right appropriation and exemplification of the facts and truths of salvation. These records have been put in writing for permanent use and handed down from century to

century, constituting what we call the Canon (rule) of the Old and New Testaments.

2. *The Books of the Bible.*

The Bible is a book of books, as well as *the* book of books. Sixty-six parts, viz., 39 in the Old Testament and 3×9 in the New Testament, make up the collection of sacred literature which has been accepted by the Jewish Synagogue and by Church Councils as the "*Holy Scriptures.*" The canonization of these books was very gradual, extending through centuries; that of the Pentateuch is generally assigned to the time of Ezra, that of the prophets (Nebiim) must have been accomplished when the Septuagint translation was made. The third part of the Old Testament, the so-called Ketubim or "writings," though already fixed by general agreement at the time of Christ's birth, did not receive the official endorsement of the Jewish authorities until about A. D. 150.

As regards the *New Testament*, we find before the end of the second century, the four Gospels, the book of Acts, 13 Epistles of Paul, the first Ep. of John and that to the Hebrews generally recognized as canonical. About the year 300 A. D., the Church father Eusebius enumerates as books of undoubted canonical authority, the aforementioned and the first Ep. of Peter; as disputed, second Peter, second and third John, James, Jude and the Apocalypse. The Council of Laodicea, in the fourth century, fixed the New Testament Canon by endorsing all the books as at present received, except the Apocalypse, which was added by subsequent synods. It appears, therefore, that the Canon has been determined, not by special divine revelation, but by the concurrent opinion of the Church.

3. *Their Integrity.*

It may be asked first, whether the books now included in our Bible have been handed down to us unaltered, as they were originally written, and whether they were written by

men properly authorized and qualified to record the facts and truths of divine revelation. As to the text of the *Old Testament* writings, we are hardly in a position, positively, to decide on its original form. The oldest Hebrew manuscript, regarded as authentic, does not date back further than A. D. 916, and there is some difference between our present Hebrew Text, the Samaritan Pentateuch and the Septuagint translation. But it can be safely asserted that the variations of readings do not seriously affect any part of either the history or the doctrine of the Old Testament. For the *New Testament* we have an abundance of early codices, among them two uncial manuscripts, the Sinaitic and the Vatican, from the fourth century. These manuscripts, as may be expected, present many variations, but none of them of such a nature, as to make the leading facts or teachings uncertain. Mark 16:9-20 is wanting in several old manuscripts; John 7:53-8:11 is omitted in some of the best and seems to be out of its natural context, though it may be genuine. John 5:3-4, Matth. 6:13, Acts 8:37 and 1 John 5:7 are probably later additions, but even the passages cited contain nothing that is at variance with the teachings of the New Testament.

4. *Authenticity and Authority.*

Most of the books of the *Old Testament* are named after the persons of whom they speak, while the author is not designated and there is much uncertainty as to the time of composition of some of them. The authority and credibility of these books, then, depends not so much upon their writer, as upon the self-testimony for truth contained in the record itself. We know from the Tel el Amarna letters and the code of Hammurabi, that the art of writing was well known before the time of Moses and of Abraham, so that the possibility of the existence of historical documents from the time of the Exodus and before is assured. We have the testimony of Christ and of the Apostles for the high value and the trustworthiness of the history and doctrine contained in

the Old Testament books, all of which, with the exception of six, are quoted in the New Testament. Besides this, the superior character and tone of their contents pledges their general credibility and authority.

For the *New Testament* we have abundant proof from the early Church fathers, that the historical books and the epistles, with few exceptions, were accepted in their day as written by the men to whom they are ascribed,—the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke before A.D. 70, and First Thessalonians already about A.D. 50, only twenty years after the death and resurrection of Christ, the rest of the New Testament before the year A.D. 100. The genuineness of all the Pauline epistles and the Apostolic origin of the fourth Gospel have again and again been confirmed by an unbiassed examination of all the available testimony. But whether or not all the books of the New Testament are accepted as authentic, the wonderful story of the life, the words and the redeeming work of our Saviour, and of the founding of the Christian Church, is told with such honest simplicity and positive assurance, in such a remarkable agreement of the testimony of the various writers, and with such a solemn appeal to the divine witness for the truthfulness of their record, that we cannot doubt the Gospel story, as transmitted to us by the disciples of Jesus Christ, to be genuine.

5. *Inspiration of the Scriptures.*

But in order to be truly authoritative, more is required of the Bible than that its books be proven authentic, intact and generally trustworthy. These books record certain facts which could not have been known, except by a supernatural revelation and which we could not accept as true, if they were not vouched for by special divine authority. Many of the doctrines contained in the Bible, likewise, transcend all ordinary human thinking and sentiment, so as to point to a higher source.

Accordingly, we find that the authors of these sacred Scriptures frequently claim to speak and write with divine

authority. In the *Old Testament* this is done in the expression: "Thus saith Jehovah" or "Hear ye the word of Jehovah," and this claim for the teachings of the Old Testament is fully endorsed in the New Testament, in such declarations as the following: "The *Holy Ghost* spake before by the mouth of David" (Acts 1:16); or, "No prophecy ever came by the will of man, but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Ghost" (II Peter 1:21)." "From a babe thou hast known the sacred writings which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. Every Scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, etc." (II Tim. 3:15, 16).

As for the *New Testament* itself, we find it recorded, that Christ promised his disciples that the Holy Ghost, whom the Father would send, would "teach them all things and guide them into all the truth" (John 14:26 and 16:13). The apostle Paul writes in 1 Cor. 2:12 "We received the Spirit of God that we might know the things that are freely given to us by God," and in Gal. 1:11, 12, "I make known to you, brethren, as touching the Gospel which was preached by me, that it is not after man. For neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ."

These declarations concerning a special revelation and inspiration are rightly applied to the whole Bible. Here we have sixty-six books or parts, written by many authors, at long intervals of time, yet all showing wonderful unity of spirit and aim, as if they were the work of one mind. The stories told in them and the truths presented appeal to the wants and aspirations of the soul in a peculiar manner, being adapted to the needs and wants of man in all ages and conditions of life. The moral and religious teaching of the Bible is so spiritual, pure and perfect, that it cannot be traced to any other but a divine origin. The conception of the person and character of Jesus Christ is so exalted, that we could not account for it as the product of human genius;

and the powerful and beneficent influence exerted by the sacred Scriptures upon the souls of men, even to the present day—all this confirms the Christian belief in the inspiration of the Bible.

6. *Distinctions and Limitations.*

As to the mode and degree of this Inspiration, we find that the ancient Jewish Synagogue, in fixing the Old Testament canon, distinguished *three degrees* of inspiration. The *first* and highest degree was ascribed to the Torah or the Pentateuch, “because God spoke with Moses mouth to mouth;” the *second* degree to the Nebiim or prophets, to whom the word of God came by internal revelation of the Spirit; the *third* to the Ketubim or poetical books and later historical writings, whose authors had the divine inspiration in a mediated form only. While this classification rested on a slight foundation, it serves to point out a difference in the form and manner of the inspiration granted to the writers of the various books. What we claim for all parts of the Bible, is the *dynamical inspiration* of the writer rather than a verbal inspiration of the writing, that is a quickening and elevating of the human faculty, so as to enable the writer to present the facts and truths in reference to man’s relation to God and the divine plan of salvation, accurately and fully. But all divine revelation as contained in the Scriptures, has passed through the medium of human thought, language and writing. It was adapted to the human needs and it was a progressive revelation. It is evident that these writers did not lose their individuality or nationality, when inspired to write religious history or doctrine. An educated man wrote differently from one who had no education, Peter differently from Paul (II Pet. 3:15 16), Amos from Isaiah (Amos 7:14), a Hebrew differently from a Greek, a writer in the tenth century before Christ differently from one living in the fifth century. The evangelist Luke expressly states in his preface, that he has “traced the

course of things accurately," before he undertook to write his Gospel.

It must be admitted that here and there, in the Bible, the human element includes traces of human *error* in minor matters of historical detail. Certain numbers and dates contain discrepancies such as "Solomon had forty thousand stalls of horses" (1 Kgs. 4:26), by the side of "Solomon had four thousand stalls (II Chron. 9:25), or "seven years of famine" in II Sam. 24:13," against "three years' famine" in 1 Chron. 21:12. It is not always possible to harmonize certain statements found in the Bible books, both in the Old and New Testaments, with results gained from other sources or even with each other. Some passages, apparently of no value, are duplicated in the same book, like the genealogy of Gibeon in I Chron. 8:29-38 and 9:35-44. On the other hand there is generally a surprising accuracy even in historical and geographical matters of small importance and a wonderful wisdom in the use of popular terms that may be tested by advanced scientific knowledge. Over against the critical tendency of the day, which hunts out and magnifies the discrepancies and errors of the Bible, it is only fair to say that a book of such unquestionable excellence and practical value can not lose much by occasional marks of human limitation and in all points of uncertainty deserves to be given the benefit of the doubt, rather than to be judged faulty.

There has been much fruitless discussion of such questions as "the inerrancy of the Scriptures," "plenary" and "verbal" inspiration, and whether we should say that the "Bible is the word of God" or "*contains* the word of God,"—fruitless because of the different meanings attached to these terms. What is essential, is that we accept the Bible as in a unique sense divinely inspired, a *trustworthy record* of the great facts of divine revelation for the salvation of man, and a *standard of religious truth*, by which all Christian doctrine can be tested and measured.

7. *Difference Between Roman and Protestant Standpoints.*

The Roman Church regards the *apocryphal* books of the Bible, the Church tradition, and the *decrees* of Church councils, as of equal authority with the sacred Canon. Protestants do not accept these as of like value, because the apocrypha were never endorsed by the proper authorities as canonical and are manifestly inferior in the substance and form of their contents. As to Tradition and Church Councils, we hold, that, however important they may otherwise be, the Holy Scriptures are sufficient as a standard of Christian teaching, by which even the decrees and resolutions of Synods and Church Councils should be tested.

In the matter of *interpreting* the Bible, Rome virtually limits the right of teaching to the clergy, subject to official direction. Protestants hold that the great facts and doctrines which we find in the Bible are sufficiently plain to be read and understood by every man. As a rule of Christian faith and practice, the Scriptures do not need the mediation of an infallible interpreter. In order to understand the *substance* of the Bible, that is, the Word of God as revealed to man, nothing more is required than that the divine spirit directly testify to the human heart. As to the *intellectual* comprehension of the individuality of different books of the Bible, the mutual relation of the facts and doctrines presented and the like, it is evident, that this requires an intelligent study of men fitted for this task. Again the proper appreciation of the *historical*, linguistic and archaeological features of the Canon presupposes an acquaintance with these branches. He who combines the gifts and faculties thus brought into requisition, whether he be a clergyman or a layman, will, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, be a competent interpreter of Holy Writ. An intelligent and trustworthy use of the Bible as the rule of faith and the standard of Christian doctrine cannot consist in a mechanical quotation of detached "proof texts" for this or that belief, but must search into the true meaning of the words of

Scripture in their connection and as a part of the divine revelation contained therein, comparing Scripture with Scripture. See Matthew 4:6 and 7.

CHAPTER VI. SUMMARY OF THE HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE.

1. *The Early Church.*

The Apostle Paul, we may say, was the first systematic theologian of the Christian Church. His epistle to the Romans is a systematic treatise on the doctrine of salvation (Soteriology). Ordinarily, Christian instruction during the apostolic age does not seem to have been imparted according to a definite plan or method. It was altogether popular and practical. The Churchfather *Ignatius* was, perhaps, the first to draw up a statement of the Christian faith in a series of propositions (about A. D. 110). The *Didache* or teaching of the Twelve Apostles, from the beginning of the second century, is a church manual for catechists and for congregations, containing both moral precepts and directions as to worship and discipline. The "Diatesseron" of Tatian, that is, selections from the four Gospels, is another monument from the early Church. The so-called *Apostles' Creed*, in its earliest form of a confession of faith, was used in the Church at Rome before the middle of the second century, though legendary authority connects it with the apostles themselves.

About the same time Christianity was attacked by the Epicurean philosopher Celsus and by the writer of satire, Lucian. To meet these attacks, several educated Greeks who had joined the Church, began to apply the philosophic terms with which they were familiar to the Christian doctrine. Such men were Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, and Origen (A. D. 185-253), with his treatise on "De Principiis" (First Truths). From that time on, the philosophic systems of successive ages have generally exercised consid-

erable influence upon the form of the Christian doctrine. In the fourth century, a controversy arose between *Arius*, a presbyter in the Church at Alexandria and his bishop Alexander, on the question, whether the Son of God was "equal" to the Father in all respects or only similar. This controversy led to the convening of a General Council at Nicaea and to the formulating of the *Nicene Creed* (A. D. 325), which declares the Son to be "God of God, begotten and not made, consubstantial with the Father." The *Athanasian Creed* (or *Symbolum Quicunque*), named after Bishop Athanasius, as the chief opponent of Arius, though of later origin, covers about the same ground, but is more dogmatic in form and contents.

The most prominent Christian teacher at the beginning of the fifth century was *Augustine*, the author of the "Confessions," of the "Christian Manual" and of the "De Civitate Dei." To his time belongs the controversy against Pelagius and Pelagianism on the question of the natural depravity of man.

2. *Middle Ages.*

The Greek theologian, *John of Damascus* (A. D. 700-760) is named as the first who expounded the Christian doctrines in proper order and showed their relation to one another. His "Summary of the Orthodox Faith" is the most important doctrinal text-book of the Greek Church and has gained for its author the name of the "Father of systematic theology." After the twelfth century, however, many such systems were published in the Western or Latin Church. Here a distinction is made between Scholasticism and Mysticism.

a. Scholasticism devoted itself mainly to the work of systematizing the accepted Church doctrines of the Catholic Church, and endeavored to prove them by means of the philosophy of Aristotle. The foremost names here are those of Archbishop Anselm, of Canterbury, the writer of "Cur Deus Homo," and of the two French theologians: the monk *Peter Abelard* and the first "doctor of theology," *Peter*

Lombard (+1164), whose *Libri Sententiarum Quatuor* was the theological text-book of the Middle Ages.

b. Mysticism. In opposition to these Scholastics, whose tendency was to treat Christian doctrine simply as a subject for intellectual study and abstract speculation, other divines emphasized the necessity of a personal interest in this doctrine and declared that to be the true object of theological training. They called themselves mystics. At the head of this school stood *Bernard of Clairvaux* (+1153), a contemporary of the famous Abélard and author of the maxim: “*Tantum Deus cognoscitur, quantum diligitur*,” (We know God only as much as we love him). In a wider sense, the *Waldensians* also, in their simple acceptance of the Scriptures as the rule of faith, their practical piety, and their rejection of the scholastic dogmas of the Catholic Church, may here be reckoned in. John Wyclif of England (+1384), and John Hus of Bohemia (+1415) anticipated a new era of Christian faith and doctrine, and prepared the way for it.

3. *Reformation Times.*

The followers of John Hus, the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren, published a large number of Church confessions and catechisms, the first one as early as 1467. The Churches of the German Reformation, likewise, soon formulated their belief in systematic treatises. In matters of doctrine, the Reformation dealt principally with personal salvation and the meaning of the sacraments, besides maintaining the supreme authority of the Bible, instead of the Church. Luther's great work is his translation of the Bible into the German language. Melancthon wrote the Augsburg Confession (1530), Zwingli a “*Commentary on the true and the false Religion*,” and Calvin his “*Institutio religionis Christianae*,” a master work in theology, but with absolute predestination for its central doctrine.

The principal Protestant Creeds, resulting from the Reformation, were the following: For the Lutheran Church,

the *Augsburg Confession*, with the Articles of Schmalkalde and the Formula concordiae; for the Reformed Churches, the *Heidelberg Catechism* of 1562 and the *Helvetic Confession*. The two latter formed the basis of the *Confessio Anglicana*, better known as the *Thirty-nine Articles* of the Church of England (1562); also of the *Westminster Confession* (1646) of the Presbyterians and the Decrees of the Synod of Dort, for the States of Holland (1618). The strong protests raised by J. Arminius and his followers against the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination were, at the Synod of Dort, put aside and the Arminian teaching was declared heretical.

The *Roman Catholic Church*, in consequence of the attacks made by Protestantism, felt constrained to revise or at least to further define her position with regard to various points of doctrine. This was done at the Council of *Trent* (1545-63), resulting in the promulgation of the "Canones et Decreta Concilii Tridentini" and the *Catechismus Romanus*. The *Greek Catholic Church* was not much influenced by the Reformation. However, about a century later, the Russian metropolitan, Peter Mogilas, assisted by several Greek priests, drew up a confession of faith for the Eastern Church, which, in 1672, received the sanction of a Council held in Jerusalem. It bears the title, "The orthodox agreement of the Catholic and Apostolic Church of the East."

4. *The Seventeenth Century.*

The theology of the seventeenth century was mainly conservative. It maintained and defined the confessional doctrines of the various Churches of the Reformation. Leonard Hutter and Abr. Calov (+1686) were prominent champions of the Lutheran faith, Hugo Grotius and John Cocceius of the Reformed. The last named was the father of the so-called "federal head" theory, on the imputation of Adam's sin to his descendants. In England the Baptist, John Bunyan (+1688) wrote *Pilgrim's Progress* and "Gospel Truths opened," and the Puritans, John Owen and Richard

Baxter, published a number of valuable works on the meaning of Scripture and on practical topics. Toward the end of the century, however, a great change in the aspect of Christian doctrine was being prepared, when philosophy, which so far had been the handmaid of theology, made itself independent and broke away from the Church. René Descartes, the author of the maxim "Cogito, ergo sum" (I think and therefore I am) began his philosophic research with universal doubt, intending to seek something that would be absolutely undeniable. The Jewish philosopher, B. Spinoza (+1677) then converted Cartesian principles into Pantheism.

5. *The Eighteenth Century.*

The history of Christian doctrine in the eighteenth century is characterized by *two opposite movements*, both of them reactions against the rather formal orthodoxy of the preceding period, viz.: *Rationalism* and a *Revival of Personal Religious Experience*.

The *Rationalistic* movement appeared first in England in the form of *Deism*, as represented by Lord H. Bolingbroke (+1751) and others, who established for themselves a system of natural religion, as opposed to revelation and exalted reason to the position of supreme judge in the realm of religious truth. In France the freethinkers Voltaire and Rousseau were the leading spirits of their time. In Germany the current of Rationalism appeared both in the theological teachings of the University, with such men as Semler and Wegscheider and in the preaching from the pulpit. It was somewhat checked by the critical philosophy of Kant, who pointed out, that pure reason by itself is unable to make any positive statement, but that human consciousness or "practical reason" requires certain axioms of religious truth, such as the belief in God, virtue and immortality. But Kant's philosophy could not revive Christian faith or inspire Christian life.

Such a revival of Christian faith and practice, founded upon experimental evidence, came simultaneously with the wave of Rationalism. It began with the rise of *Pietism* in Ph. J. Spener (+1705), who emphasized the need of personal experience against a dead orthodoxy of belief and instituted prayer-meetings and circles for the cultivation of practical piety and the study of the Bible, the "*Ecclesiolae in Ecclesia*" (little churches within the Church). A. H. Francke (+1727), founder of the Halle Orphanage, the Halle Bible-house, the Divinity School and Foreign Missionary Society, continued Spener's work. Later Count Zinzendorf (+1760) and Bishop Spangenberg (+1792), the writer of the "*Idea Fidei Fratrum*," with the "*Moravian Brethren*," proved and proclaimed anew the wisdom and power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ by their religious fervor, their earnest Christian life and their enthusiastic and successful Missionary activity. John Wesley (1703-1791), with the Methodists, also made the same personal experience of the living power of the Holy Spirit in converting the soul, and then, with burning evangelistic zeal, spread the story of salvation through the cross of Jesus among the people far and wide.

It was only after these preachers and missionaries had again practically established the leading facts and truths of the Christian religion by experimental evidence, that the schools of theology ventured to reconstruct their doctrinal systems. American theology of that time, however, as taught by Jonathan Edwards (+1758) and other New England divines, was not much influenced by the 18th Century Rationalism. It was largely engaged in questions of Calvinistic doctrine, particularly that about the "guilt of in-born depravity," on which point it divided into the Old and the New School.

6. *The Nineteenth Century.*

In Germany the new era of positive Christian theology began with F. Schleiermacher (+1834), who had been a

student of the Moravian College at Niesky and who, though himself still somewhat under the influence of Rationalism, inspired many thousands of students with a new and fervent interest in religion and theology, especially in the person of Christ, the Saviour. In his work, "The Christian Faith," the subjective element of the inner consciousness and of pious feeling, rather than any objective evidence or traditional authority is made the foundation of the confession of faith. For a time the philosophy of Hegel, with its theory of the identity of thought and being, and of a succession of self-evolving world-conceptions, led many again into the error of treating all records of a special and miraculous revelation as myths and self-delusion. This culminated in D. F. Strauss, in 1836, publishing his "Life of Jesus," intended to show, that the wonderful facts of Christ's life are but myths, unconscious fictions of the Christian Church. What Strauss wrote for German scholars, that Rénan did for French novel readers. The great majority, however, of the leaders in theology and Christian doctrine, in Germany and elsewhere, were moved to take a firmer hold on the essentials of revealed religion, as transmitted to us by the early Church. Thus many "Lives of Jesus" were composed by different writers and the study of the Bible was taken up with greatly increased interest and zeal.

Then followed a large array of important *Evangelical works* on Systematic Theology published in different countries and from the standpoints of different denominations. Among these may be mentioned: Richard Watson (+1833), with his "Theological Institutes," the textbook of the Methodist faith; Thomas Chalmers (+1847) and Thomas Dick (+1857), both Scotch Presbyterians; the Danish Lutheran Bishop Martensen and the German Lutherans, Luthardt, Delitsch and Kahnis; Herman Plitt, "Evan-gelische Glaubenslehre," of the Moravian Church; Lange and Ebrard representing the Reformed standpoint in Ger-

many and Van Oosterzee (1817-1881) in Holland. I. A. Dorner, A. G. Tholuk and Martin Kaehler of the Evangelical State Church of Germany.

In the United States, the three volumes of "Systematic Theology," by Chas. Hodge of Princeton (+1878), together with the works of L. F. Stearns, H. B. Smith and Wm. Schedd of Union Theol. Sem. in New York, represent the strict and the moderate Calvinism of the Presbyterian Church, and the "Systematic Theology" of A. H. Strong of Rochester, the viewpoint of the Baptist denomination. All these and many other most valuable works, published in America and in Europe, give a systematic exposition of Christian doctrine, in accordance with the teachings of the Bible as the standard of religious belief.

A great change, however, in religious thought and expression has taken place during the last fifty years. Since the publication of C. Darwin's "Origin of Species," in 1859, the theory of evolution has pretty generally been accepted, and not only in matters of science. In every department of thought the idea of development prevails. The Christian religion, also, is a part of the world's development and is a historic religion. Therefore, in order to be properly understood, it must be studied in connection with the general history of humanity. The Bible in particular, as a part of the sacred literature of the world, yet with the claim of being the inspired record of divine revelation, is subjected to a critical historical examination. "*Higher criticism*" enquires into the origin, composition and authoritative value of every part of the Canon. This enquiry frequently leads to negative results.

There have been so many surprising discoveries in science and biology, in geology and ancient monuments, in psychology and comparative religion, that the old belief in the Bible and in the truth of the Christian faith has, in the case of many professing Christians, given way to doubt and unbelief. Many real or supposed bulwarks of Christian

doctrine have fallen or are crumbling away. There is a general tendency among younger "scholars" to disparage all traditional authority, to exaggerate discrepancies and difficulties found in the Bible and in the Christian belief, and to make sweeping assertions as to what may or may not be accepted as true. At the Universities and Divinity schools, the teachers of theology are divided into two camps: the *old*, so-called traditional, and the *modern theology*, the advanced or radical and the positive or conservative party, the old faith and the new. The attempts of some of the foremost leaders in German theology at mediating between the two extremes, like A. Harnack in "What is Christianity?" and Albert Ritschl (+1889), in "Die christliche Lehre von der Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung," have proved satisfactory to neither side.

There must come a better general understanding of what are the essentials of the Christian faith and what are non-essentials. The real issue centers in the two questions: 1. Is the *Bible* simply a book like other books of human literature, a product of the human mind and human development, or is it in any sense a record of divine revelation and the inspired "word of God?" 2. Is the *religious* life and *belief* of mankind a natural or a supernatural process? Does it come from man only or was it given and directed by God? Was Jesus Christ simply a religious enthusiast or is he our Saviour?

The increased general interest in the person of Christ and the great revival and success of missionary activity are the two most cheering evidences of the undying vitality of the Christian faith. They also pledge the continued upholding of the essential doctrines of Christian theology, as founded on the Bible and personal experience.

Part First—God the Creator.

CHAPTER VII. THE NATURE AND ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.

1. *Can we know God?*

The philosopher Schelling defined the divine Being as a dark primary substance which cannot be fathomed by the Being itself, and Herbert Spencer declares it "the most certain of all facts that the power which the Universe manifests to us, is utterly inscrutable." Contrary to these statements, the Bible tells us that men may and should know God (Rom. 1:19, John 17:3). While it is plain that finite man cannot fully comprehend an infinite God, that such knowledge can only go as far as God has pleased to reveal himself and as far as man consciously enters into the fellowship of God, yet it pleased God to make himself known to man. Our knowledge of God, as Augustine has shown by an illustration, may be as imperfect and circumscribed as that of the little boy at the seashore who lets the tide run into a hole which he has scooped out of the sand in order to have his own sea. But if God himself has taught man to know him, such knowledge must be pure and precious.

2. *Oneness of God.*

We know, in the first place, that there is but *one* God. This was a fundamental principle of Old Testament teaching: "Hear, O Israel, Jehovah, thy God, is one God" (Deut. 6:4). It is distinctly corroborated by the testimony of Christ and his apostles: "There is one God, and there is none other but he" (Mark 12:32), comp. Eph. 4:6 and I Cor. 8:4-6. This truth is, furthermore, apparent from the unity of design in the Universe. Uniformity of law throughout the creation proclaims the unity of the Creator. The notion of two or more Gods is self-contradictory. One

absolute God is sufficient to create and to govern the world, a second one would be superfluous. There cannot be two beings infinitely perfect, since the perfections of the one would include those of the other; and finally, two Gods could not be omnipotent, since the one could not act without the consent of the other. In short, divine perfection allows of no division, dualism or polytheism.

3. *Methods of Defining the Nature of God.*

In endeavoring to define the Being of God and to predicate anything about him, two methods can be pursued: *a. The inductive or Bible method.* This takes the Bible as the decisive authority with regard to God's attributes and collects the various declarations there found, which are then simply classified under general heads. *b. The rational method.* This method takes man as the "image of God" for a starting point, and proceeds to define the nature of God by way of negation and eminence. It denies the existence of any imperfections in God, that may be found in created beings, and ascribes to him absolutely all the perfections found in man, adding whatever may be necessary to explain his manifestation to the world.

It must be admitted that these attributes, so far as they are derived from human conditions and couched in human language, can but imperfectly express the nature of God; but their Biblical endorsement as well as our Christian consciousness assure us that they are not merely human conceptions of a finite mind.

4. *The Personality of God.*

We find in the New Testament two brief definitions of the Being of God, the one in John 4:24, as given by Christ to the Samaritan woman: "*God is Spirit*," the other from the apostle, in I John 4:8: "*God is Love*." These two declarations are both fundamental and comprehensive.

a. God is Spirit, must mean, in the first place, that he is not material, that is not visibly or tangibly perceived, and not compounded. If he were a material Being, he would

not be infinite nor immutable. The term "Spirit" also implies self-consciousness and self-determination. Man *has* a spirit which gradually develops into conscious life, with thought, feeling and volition; but God *is* all Spirit and therefore has all knowledge and metaphysical attributes from the beginning.

b. In like manner the declaration, "*God is love*" designates him as the perfection of ethical attributes. Man is able to love and pure, unselfish love is man's highest accomplishment. It is this that distinguishes man from the brute creation, that he has a spirit and can love. That constitutes him a *personal* being, intellectually and morally. But man's personality is limited. God, in whose image man was created, must be the absolute personality, metaphysically and ethically the superlative of the human personality. (Exod. 3:14.)

Pantheists object to the ascribing of the term "*personality*" to the supreme Being, because the distinction between subject and object, self and not-self in a personality implies limitation. But the true definition of personality is not limitation, rather full control of every part and faculty, the complete harmony between the subject and the object. A human personality, indeed, is subject to the limitations of time and space, but God, the absolute personality, is not.

5. *Metaphysical Attributes.*

The attributes of God, that is the qualities and faculties which we ascribe to him, on the authority of the Bible and of their manifestation, can be divided into classes, in various ways. We classify them under the two heads indicated by the terms: Spirit and Love, as *metaphysical* and *moral* attributes. First, the metaphysical:

a. Eternal. Every created being has the ground of its existence in something else, God must be independent of any other existence. He is the first cause of every thing and the source of life. He is without beginning or end. Men may be said to live in the past and future only, to God

all time is an eternal present. Time is to him but the mode of existence which he has appointed for his creatures, to appear and to vanish in successive ages. There was no time, when he was not and there will be none, when he shall not be. (Psalm 90:1-2, Isaiah 48:12.)

b. Unchangeable. All created beings change, but God is immutable. As he is neither material nor compounded, he cannot increase nor decrease. All change must be for better or for worse, but God is absolute perfection. His knowledge and power cannot become greater or less, nor can he become holier or more gracious than he ever was. No change can be produced by any outside cause, because he is not dependent on anything. He appears changed simply, because of the changing position of the creature toward him, as the sun "goes down," when the earth turns away from it. But immutability does not mean inactivity, nor is it inconsistent with perfect freedom. Psalm 102:27, James 1:17.

c. Omnipresent. God's presence is not limited by space, be it a heaven or an earthly abode. He is immanent in the universe, not by compulsion, but by the free act of his own will, and he transcends all creation. His is not a material omnipresence, else there would be a division, one part of God here and another elsewhere. It is a dynamical presence of God in the universe. With this omnipresence the Scriptural declaration that heaven is the throne of God does not conflict. For he can manifest his glory more brightly in the realm which we call heaven, be that a locality or merely a sphere of activity. Psalm 139:7-10, Acts 17:28.

d. Omniscient and Allwise. Human knowledge is limited in many respects, but all knowable things are known to God, because he himself is the eternal light. His knowledge is all pervading, a direct beholding of whatever exists in all its extension and to its deepest ground. He knows things future, as well as things past, not only what is, but also what may be. God foreknows even the free will and the

free acts of man, because man's thought and determination are compassed about by the creator. God is allwise, always selecting the best means for the accomplishment of his purpose. His wisdom is made manifest everywhere in the realm of nature, but most of all in the plan of salvation. Psalm 139 :1-4, Romans 11 :33.

e. Almighty. We predicate of God Omnipotence—that is power without limitation. He can do whatever he wills and there is nothing impossible with God. He can accomplish whatever is an object of power. But God's will is determined by his nature; therefore he cannot do anything that would be contrary to himself. He can do all that he will, but he cannot will what is contrary to his own law. As light cannot be darkness, so God can do no evil. Psalm 135 :6, Luke 1 :37.

6. *Moral Attributes.*

Taking the term "Love" in its most comprehensive sense, we may class under this head four moral attributes, which we find most frequently ascribed to God in the Scriptures and which express the love of God in its various aspects, both as divine self-preservation and as a caring for the happiness of other beings.

a. Holy. God is holy. His moral excellence, first of all, consists in being absolutely pure and perfect, without any blemish or defect. He is forever separated from and averse to anything that is unholy or impure, a consuming fire which destroys whatever is unholy. The negative aspect of this manifestation of God's holiness is sometimes called the wrath of God, or we find it stated that he is a "jealous" God. Isaiah 6 :3, I Pet. 1 :16.

b. Righteous and true. God is righteous in all his works, that is uniform in all his dealings. This attribute of God again presents a positive and a negative aspect. He is true to himself and faithful toward all who work righteousness. His promises are "yea and amen," but he cannot indulge the sinner. He must condemn sin, as opposed to his holy

law, and he cannot pardon the guilty, unless the demands of justice are complied with. Deut. 32:4, Rom. 2:6.

c. Kind and good. God is good. By this attribute we understand the principle of God's nature which leads him to favor all his creatures by communicating to them his own blessedness, as far as they are able to receive his gifts. Such goodness of God is manifest in his providence and in all the temporal and spiritual blessings vouchsafed to man. Ps. 145:8, 9, Matth. 5:45.

d. Merciful and gracious. Mercy is that attribute of God which causes him to seek the temporal good and eternal salvation even of those, who do not deserve his love. This attribute is of primary importance to the sinner and to fallen humanity. The Lord is long suffering and full of compassion. His mercy has been fully revealed in the redemption of our race through Jesus Christ, the Saviour. Exod. 34:6, 7, John 3:16.

CHAPTER VIII. THE HOLY TRINITY.

1. *The Idea of the Trinity.*

The term "Trinity" is not found in the Bible, although the conception which it expresses is Biblical. It represents the truth, that in the one God whom we worship there are certain "distinctions," which are expressed by various names, but most frequently under the figure of three persons, as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The existence of such a distinction in God may be surmised on *philosophic* grounds, as implied in the idea of the divine personality. If God was eternally self-conscious, he must be objective to himself, and if thinking and being in God must be identical, the distinction of thought involves the distinction of existence. Again the "love" of God requires an eternal object of his affection. This object could not have been first supplied by the creation of the world; he must have possessed it in himself, or else he would have needed the

world, to become perfect. Thus reason supports the idea of a plurality in the divine essence.

Traces of a belief in a threefold distinction are found in the *mythologies* of various pagan nations, as that of the Greeks, Germans and Chinese. The Babylonian Magi taught, that there was a threefold mind of God, viz., the supernatural or the first cause, the filial or world builder, and the wisdom of God. Similarly Plato distinguished in the divine Being, first, his essence ("the good"); second, the "reason" or "word" (Logos), as the revelation of God; third, the "world-soul," which produced the universe. However, the Christian idea of the Trinity is based upon the Bible.

2. *The Biblical Testimony.*

In the *Old Testament* we find but few indications of a distinction or plurality in God, such as the following:

a. The use of the plural form in the divine nouns, Elohim and Adonai and in passages like: "Let us make man" and "let us go down" (Gen. 1:26 and 11:7).

b. The "angel of the Lord" and the "angel of the face," to whom divine honor is rendered (Gen. 22:15, 16, Judges 6:12, 14).

c. Passages where Jehovah is distinguished from Jehovah (Gen. 19:24, Psalm 110:1-2).

d. The Spirit and the Word of God are distinguished from God in Gen. 1:2, 3, Isaiah 55:11, Ps. 104:30, etc.

e. The threefold repetition of the name of Jehovah in the Old Testament benediction (Numb. 6:24-26) and the threefold "Holy" of the Seraph-song in Isaiah 6:3.

In the *New Testament* the distinction of Father, Son and Holy Spirit is clearly taught.

a. In a few passages the three are named *side by side*, viz., in the formula of baptism (Matth. 28:18-20); in the New Testament benediction (II Cor. 13:14), and in I Pet. 1:2. The two last named, however, substitute the name of Christ for the Son.

b. More frequently, the three are mentioned *separately* as divine. Thus we read of God the Father in I Cor. 8:6 and Eph. 4:6; of the Son in Hebr. 1:2 and Gal. 4:4; and of the Holy Spirit as a personal Being in Acts 13:2: "The Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work, whereunto I have called them." Christ, in speaking of the Holy Spirit, John 16:8, uses the personal pronoun "He," and in I Cor. 2:10 and 13, the Spirit is said to act by searching all things and teaching men.

3. *Relation and Work of the Three.*

With regard to the respective functions of Father, Son and Spirit, we find four facts predicated of each of the three:

a. Of the Father: 1. He is the first cause, the origin of all things. (Rom. 11:36.) 2. He is the Father of the Son of God, as the only begotten and the object of his love (John 17:5). 3. He made the worlds through the Son (Heb. 1:2) and reconciled the world to himself (II Cor. 5:18, 19). 4. He draws men to the Son, in order to save them (John 6:44), and adopts them as children and sons of God in the only begotten one (I John 3:1).

b. Of the Son: 1. He is the eternal son of the Father, begotten before the foundation of the world and equal with him in glory and power (John 17:5, Heb. 1:3). 2. He came forth from heaven, in order to reveal the Father unto men and to do the Father's will (John 1:18 and 6:38). 3. Through him all things were created and in him all things consist (Col. 1:16, 17). 4. He is the mediator of salvation, by whom alone men can be saved (John 3:16).

c. Of the Spirit: 1. He is the Spirit of God, knowing and revealing the deep things of God. He proceeds from the Father and is sent by the Son (I Cor. 2:10, John 15:26). 2. He brooded over the waters of the natural creation with quickening power and gives light and life in the moral world (Gen. 1:2, John 14:26). 3. By his "overshadowing" the "word was made flesh" and Christ, the Saviour, was

baptized with the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35, John 1:14 and 26). 4. He guides men into the truth, regenerates the soul and dwells in the children of God as the principle of spiritual life (John 16:13, Rom. 5:5).

4. *Church Controversies.*

This being the substance of Biblical teaching concerning the Trinity, the Apostolic Church made no attempt at further defining, how these distinctions in the triune God should be understood. Learned Christians of the second century, like Clement of Alexandria, who had studied the Platonic philosophy, first began to apply Platonic terms to this point of Christian doctrine, comparing the Son to "reason" and the Spirit to "virtue" in man. The word *Trias* came from the Alexandrian School and *Tertullian* was the first to use its Latin form, *Trinitas*.

A. D. 190 a controversy began between *Tertullian* and the Greek *Praxeas*, the latter contending that Father, Son and Spirit are not different subjects, but three manifestations of the same subject. One of his followers, *Sabellius*, gave to this idea the definite form: "There is but one divine Hypostasis (substance or existence), but three modes of appearance or manifestation." This declaration involved a denial of the eternal existence of the Son of God and called forth a decided protest from many theologians, who styled the followers of *Sabellius*, "*Patripassians*," that is, men who say that God the father himself suffered and died on the cross, because they believe in but one divine substance or existence. In 318 A. D. another dispute arose on the Trinity. *Arius* of Alexandria contended that the Son of God did exist before the birth of Christ, but as the first creature. He was not of the same essence with the Father, not like him, but similar. *Arius*, though deposed from office and excommunicated, secured the adherence of large numbers both of the clergy and laity to his view. This controversy, finally, led to the convening of the first ecumenical Church Council at Nice in Nicomedia, A. D. 325, in order to have the question settled.

5. *The Orthodox Creed.*

The *Nicene Creed* has ever since been regarded as the standard of orthodox belief, with regard to the Holy Trinity. Beginning with: "We believe in one God, the Father almighty," etc., it continues: "and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, only begotten, begotten of the Father, *i.e.*, of the essence of the Father, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten and not made, consubstantial with the Father, by whom all things are made in heaven or on earth, etc....and we believe in the Holy Ghost. But those who say that there was a time, when the Son was not, that he was not before he was made, or was made out of nothing, or of another or different essence or substance, that he was a creation or mutable or susceptible of change, the Holy Catholic Church anathematizes."

With regard to the Spirit, the Nicene Council as yet had no detailed declaration, although it was the general understanding that the Holy Spirit also was "consubstantial with the Father." But as some disputed this, a second ecumenical Council was called at Constantinople, A. D. 381, to decide that point. Here the following was added: "Who is the Lord and giver of life, who proceeded from the Father." Some Greek theologians and the majority of the Roman divines, then, contended that the Spirit proceeds not from the Father only, but also "from the Son." In the sixth century this question again appeared of great importance, because the followers of Arius who had gained many converts, pointed to the "proceeded from the Father" as an endorsement of their contention, that the Son was not equal with the Father. Thereupon the Roman churches had another Council called in the city of Toledo in Spain, A. D. 589. Here it was decided to add the words "and from the Son" (*Filioque*). As this was no "Ecumenical" Council, the Greek Churches did not accept the decision and the controversy, stimulated by the rivalry

between the Metropolitan of Constantinople and the Pope of Rome continued until in the eleventh century, when it became one of the leading causes in the division between the Greek and the Roman Catholic Churches.

6. *The Disputed Points.*

As to the "Filioque" (and from the Son), it may be stated that although Holy Scripture nowhere expressly teaches it and the Greek Church has this in her favor, yet we find that whatever is predicated of the Spirit's relation to the Father, is also predicated of his relation to the Son. The Apostle Paul calls the Spirit of God,—the Spirit of Christ and in that sense, at least, he proceeds from the Son. In general, the doctrine of the Trinity has been substantially left by the Christian Church, where the Councils of the fourth century placed it. The *Reformers* of the sixteenth century had other points of doctrine, of greater practical importance, to discuss and to decide and the Protestant creeds simply incorporated the Trinity dogma as given in the Catholic creed. However, the teachings of Sabellius and of Arius, though condemned by the Church as heresies, frequently in one form or another found new defenders, and the sixteenth century added a new heresy, under the name of *Socinianism*. Two professors, Laelius and Faustus Socinus, uncle and nephew, attacked the Nicene creed as teaching three Gods, God Father, God Son and God Spirit. They taught that Christ was not an incarnation of the Son of God, but a human being like ourselves, and only after his death exalted to divine honor, a deified man; and that the Holy Spirit is not a divine person, but a mode of divine operation. Their followers became known as *Unitarians*.

It must be said that this Socinian Unitarianism is not in accord with Scripture doctrine. The Bible distinctly teaches a divine Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Ghost, but as to the exact nature of this Trinity *several questions* are open to discussion, such as: whether the Trinity of revelation necessarily involves an immanent, or ontological Trinity?

whether it is a threefold existence or only a threefold mode of existence in one divine personality? whether the designation of three persons in the Godhead is appropriate?

If, as we believe, the revelation of God to the world is the exposition of his true being, it appears that the temporal or economic Trinity, as it has been called, must have a corresponding immanent and eternal Trinity. Again, if the Father begets the Son and if the Spirit proceeds from the Father, if, as John writes (John 1:1, 2), the "Word was in the beginning with God," a threefold *personality* also appears well proven. The term: "three persons," however, is not derived from Scripture and in the present use of the word is somewhat objectionable, because in different human persons there is no unity of substance. Originally, "*persona*" simply meant a mask worn by an actor and then the part or character played by him.

In whatever form the doctrine of the Trinity may be stated, it contains a *mystery* which transcends our understanding. Nor is it essential that we should penetrate this mystery. We may be thankful, that in formulating the general Creed of the Christian Church this and other points of doctrine were examined and defined by the Church Fathers, with the acumen peculiar to the Greek mind and language, but we do not attach as much importance to such definitions. We know that the *practical* New Testament confession of belief in the Trinity is not: We have "one God Father, one God Son and one God Holy Spirit," but "one God, the Father, one Lord Jesus Christ, and the Spirit of God" (I Cor. 8:6 and 7:40).

7. *Illustrations and Practical Aspect.*

Analogies for the mystery of the triune God have been found both in unities which contain a plurality and in pluralities which form a unity. Such are:

a. Inanimate objects: A triangle with three sides; a flame with three points; space having the three dimensions of length, breadth, and thickness; electricity, manifested in

heat, light and motion; a plant, containing root, stalk and flower.

b. Man. Man, made in the image of God, consists of body, soul and spirit; has the three faculties, of intellect, emotion and will, or of knowledge, love and power.

c. The family. This illustration, in the form of father and son, is directly authorized by Scripture and alluded to in I Cor. 11:3 and 3:23, though we are hardly warranted in representing the Spirit as the “mother,” as some have done.

For the *practical importance* of the doctrine of the Trinity, the following points may be mentioned: *a.* It helps us to a better understanding of the eternal independence and blessedness of the triune God. *b.* It enables us to understand, how Christ could become the Saviour and mediator between God and man, because the son of God became incarnate in him. *c.* It shows, how by the Holy Spirit’s dwelling in the hearts of men, humanity can be truly united with God (John 3:5).

CHAPTER IX. THE CREATION OF THE WORLD.

1. *The Meaning of Creation.*

We believe in God “the creator of heaven and earth,” that is both of the visible and invisible world (Gen. 1:1). When we say that God created the universe, we mean that, by an act of free will, he produced something, without the use of preëxisting materials, something which was not before. This statement meets with the objection, that “nothing can come out of nothing.” Ancient mythologies and philosophies assumed an eternal existence of matter. Plato taught that God formed a world-soul by mixing divine ideas with matter and thus moulding the visible world. Similarly, modern scientists assume a primeval condition of the universe in a chaotic diffusion of matter, with all the properties and powers latent in it, which afterwards became apparent. But such scientific belief does not explain the

origin of matter itself nor answer the question, how inorganic material could ever have evolved into living forms, without a conscious intelligence directing such evolution.

If the principle, that nothing comes out of nothing, means that there can be no effect without cause, it does not conflict with the belief in a creator. For the cause of the world is not nothing, but an almighty and all wise God. Heb. 11:3 teaches, that "the worlds have been framed by the word of God, so that what is seen hath been made out of things which are not visible," by which we understand the infinite faculties and potencies of divine power (Rom. 4:17).

2. *The Object of Creation.*

It has been claimed by some, that a creation in time would involve a change in God from inaction to activity. For that reason, Origen assumed that there was an eternal succession of created worlds. But creation from eternity is a contradiction in terms. The Christian belief in the Trinity implies an eternal activity within the divine Being, which needs no created world. The world is eternal only in the sense of Eph. 3:11, that it was created according to an "eternal purpose," but not in its material existence. There was a time when there was no world. Its creation was an act of God's free will. No outside necessity constrained him to create. He did not need the world, to have an object of his love, because the triune God was sufficient unto himself and he had in the Trinity an abundant scope for the exercise of divine activity. On the other hand, it follows from the nature of an infinite Being, that the final object of the creation must be in God and not outside of him.

This leads to the conclusion that God created the world for his own glory, in the manifestation of his divine excellence. Such manifestation of his perfection, however, as the God of love, implies the happiness of his creatures. Hence it has been well said, that the world was created for the *glory* of God and for the *happiness* of the creature.

3. *Creation and Evolution.*

A divine creation does not exclude orderly growth and development. While the visible world is to us first of all "creatura," it is also "natura," an organism regulated by fixed laws. Its forces and elements are unfolded in a great variety of forms, but under the absolute control of the divine will. Natural science deals mainly with the laws of natural development, without reference to the lawgiver, while theology emphasizes more the fact that behind all the laws of nature stands the name of God Almighty, as the first and last cause of all finite things. But neither the Nebular Hypothesis nor any other theory of Evolution is necessarily antagonistic to revelation, as long as it acknowledges that it is God who fixed the laws of evolution and who rules by them. If science should render it certain, that all present species of living creatures were derived by natural descent from a few original germs, we should not, therefore, lose the belief in the divine creation. Evolution presupposes something that evolves and that must first have been created.

4. *The Mosaic Record.*

How the world came into existence and how it attained its present status, cannot be known by the testimony of eye-witnesses. Nor is it necessary that we should have a clear understanding of the birth and growth of our earth, further than what is revealed to us through God's book of nature in the strata of geology, the "autobiography of the earth." We have, however, in the opening chapters of the Bible a brief account of the origin and gradual formation of the earth, which can rightly claim to be considered not the fanciful conception of a poetic imagination, but a simple statement of actual events. Unlike the cosmogonies of pagan nations, such as is given in the Babylonian Creation Tablets, it places God the creator at the head of the record and then proceeds to give a pictorial sketch of the history of creation in a form suited to the common mind and to the

understanding of men in all successive ages. While it, probably, rests on ancient tradition handed down from primeval times, it has approved itself as composed under special divine guidance, by the remarkable manner, in which its simple language is adapted to meet the ascertained results of modern research.

The general outline of its creative days or acts agrees well with the accepted epochs of geology. Both teach that there came *first*: an inorganic epoch, with three successive stages, viz., *a.* light, *b.* land, and *c.* vegetation; *second*: an organic epoch, with three successive stages, viz., *a.* the appearing of fish, *b.* of birds and reptiles, *c.* of land animals (mammals) and man.

CHAPTER X. THE GOVERNMENT OF THE WORLD.

1. *Preservation.*

With the doctrine of the Creation, that of the Preservation of the world is intimately connected. If the world was called into being by God, it must be absolutely dependent upon him. It owes its continued existence entirely to his will and would cease to be, if for one moment it were not supported by his power. As the flowing of a stream depends upon the supply of water from its fountains, so the life of the creation constantly depends upon the Creator (Nehem. 9:6, Ps. 104:29).

Two points are implied in this axiom of the necessary relation between God and the world. One is, that the Creator must fully *understand* his creation in all its parts. If he were merely the world builder, the world might be foreign to him and he would be obliged to make himself acquainted with its detail. Not so the Creator. The other is, that God can *never leave* the care of the world. As Melanethon has illustrated, a shipbuilder may go away from his ship and relinquish it to the sailors, when completed, but not our Lord. This was the fundamental error of the Deism of the seventeenth century, which regarded the universe as

a self-sustained mechanism, which God left to its natural development after he had created it. The position of so many Christians in our own day who, if not in theory, at least practically hold that God is not concerned in the detail of the world's course, is as illogical as it is contrary to Scripture.

2. *Providence.*

God not only preserves and maintains what he has created, he also provides for and controls everything in the world. This providence is both *general*,—extending over the physical world, over the affairs of nations, over the general events of human history,—and it is *particular*, that is including what seem to us the minor affairs of nature and human life. We call it *special* providence, when the effect produced bears a special relation or makes a special impression upon us.

Many who acknowledge God's general providence, deny the divine arrangement of *particular events*. They hold, that when God created the world, he fixed the laws of nature definitely and irrevocably, so that there can be no continued intervention on his part. His activity is limited to the maintenance of general laws. This idea, however, is contrary to the explicit declarations of the Bible.

a. In Christ's sermon on the Mount even the ordinary operations of physical law are traced to the particular or special providence of God; such as "he sendeth rain," "he feedeth the fowls of the air and clothes the grass of the field" (Matth. 5:45 and 6:26, 30), and in another place: "Not one sparrow shall fall on the ground without your Father: but the very hairs of your head are all numbered" (Matth. 10:29, 30). Therefore, the laws of nature are under the constant control of the Creator and a general control of the course of nature or history is impossible without control of particulars.

b. Furthermore, the nature of God, as the God of love, warrants the assurance that he watches over the destinies of his creatures in the smallest details. Indeed, faith in a

particular providence is essential to personal religion. There can be no devout worship without a direct relation to God, without the belief that God accepts and attends to the prayer and supplication of each individual worshipper.

c. Christian experience, also, confirms this assurance that there is a special providence watching over us and that particular events are brought about by God for the special benefit of individual men. In all this providence, as a rule, God makes use of ordinary laws of nature to accomplish his purpose.

3. *Miracles.*

When something occurs which cannot be explained on the ground of natural laws, we call it a miracle. The Holy Scriptures record many miracles of healing, of deliverance and special providence, as well as miraculous manifestations of divine justice and power. It should be noted, however, that where the "Authorized Version" reads "miracles" (wonderful things), the original has either "signs" or "powers." That wonderful things and events happen and have happened, no one can deny, but there are many who do not believe in any miracle, in the sense of something that is not in conformity with the laws of nature, ever occurring either in our day or in Bible times. They hold to the absolute uniformity of natural law. But miracles can be accounted for in one of three ways: *a.* a suspension of the regular law, *b.* an extraordinary application of the ordinary law, *c.* the working of a law, yet undiscovered by man. It may be said, that we are unable to determine what is a miracle and what not, because we have not discovered all the laws, and because the occurrence of what is termed a miracle rests largely on uncertain human testimony.

The *possibility*, however, of miracles in the sense of supernatural acts cannot be denied:

a. We observe that even in the ordinary course of events natural laws are frequently superseded or counteracted by higher laws or by the human will producing results opposite to what nature would accomplish.

b. Belief in a personal God implies the assurance, that the author of the laws of nature cannot be fettered by those laws in such a manner as to make it impossible for him to use special measures for the accomplishment of special purposes.

c. Miracles, therefore, have their place as accompaniments and attestations of a special divine revelation. Thus we find in the Bible, that epochs of signal miracles were generally coincident with epochs of new and needful revelation.

And the time of miracles has not yet passed. They are constantly happening. There are miracles of answered prayer, miracles of help and deliverance, miracles of grace, "miracles of missions." Two extremes must be guarded against. The one is an unhealthy, superstitious craving for miracles; the other is the desire to explain away every miracle, in the Bible or elsewhere, by tracing it to natural causes. To the Christian believer, miracles are a constant evidence of God's personal government of the world.

4. *The Divine Decrees.*

The divine government of the world includes the foreknowledge and foreordaining of future events. The limitations of time do not apply to Him who inhabits eternity. The events of time are but the gradual unfolding of the eternal purpose of God (Ephes. 1:11, Rom. 9:17). This doctrine, so far as it also includes the will and act of rational creatures in the divine plan, presents some *difficulty*. It seems incompatible with the free agency of man, which is the distinguishing mark between him and the brute creation, and it seems to destroy all motive to self-exertion, if whatever is done was predetermined. This twofold difficulty can be met; the *first*, by saying that an event or act may be foreordained and yet free, if the divine decree includes the free will of the creatures as a part of the decree; the *second*, similarly, by holding that the means of accomplishing something, as well as the end, are foreordained.

It must be admitted, however, that this combination of necessity and freedom is a mystery which our finite understanding cannot fully comprehend. Both Scripture and practical experience teach, that man's free will is limited by many things beyond his control, but they also assure us that there is room left, within the divine decree, for man's choosing either the good or the evil and that the eternal divine purpose is founded upon infinite wisdom and love.

CHAPTER XI. THE ANGELS.

1. *Existence of Angels.*

According to Scripture, all creation is divided into two classes, viz., a *visible* and an *invisible* creation,—material and spiritual existences (Col. 1:16, II Cor. 4:18). To the latter belong what are called angels (messengers) or spirits, both good and evil. The existence of such beings might be assumed on the ground of a gradation of created beings. As in the material world there is a gradual ascent from the stone to man, so in the invisible sphere there may be creatures of higher than human intelligence. This possibility is declared a certainty by the testimony of Holy Writ.

Because of the absence of present day manifestations, many *doubt* the existence of angels and declare this belief a remnant of polytheism or simply a personification of spiritual forces. The latter view has some support in the fact that at least the Cherubim and Seraphim in the Old Testament writings and the "living creatures" of the book of Revelation are, evidently, symbolical appearances rather than personal beings. Again in Psalm 104:4, "Who maketh winds his angels and a flaming fire his ministers" and in II Kings 19:35, "the angel of the Lord went out and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand," simple powers of nature seem to be designated as angels. (Compare John 5:4.) But whatever degree of *individuality* or personality there may be in different classes of angels, Scripture clearly teaches the *actual existence* of spiritual beings, besides humanity. We cannot set aside the

testimony of Christ and the Apostles who have endorsed the belief in angels in the most definite manner. See Matth. 22:30, Acts 7:53, Heb. 1:14. In truth, it is the most natural thing to believe in a spiritual world analogous to the world of man and its counterpart. If this material world is everywhere teeming with forms of life, in earth and water and air, it would be strange not to find the invisible realms inhabited by a like gradation of spiritual powers and personalities.

2. *Nature of Angels.*

The Scripture statements with regard to the nature of angels can be summed up under the following heads:

a. They are *spirits* (Heb. 1:14), not limited by the laws of material existence nor by those of sexual relation (Matth. 22:30). Having no material body, they are not subject to physical death (Luke 20:36). But they can materialize, so as to become visible and tangible and to be able to eat and drink (Gen. 18:8).

b. They have a *superhuman intelligence* and power, yet are subject to the limitations natural to all creatures. They are not omnipresent and do not know the future; they are deficient, when compared with the perfections of God (II Pet. 2:11, Mark 13:32, Job 4:18).

c. They are of great *number*. They are called a host in the Old Testament and an innumerable company in the New Testament (Gen. 32:2, Heb. 12:22).

d. They differ in *rank* and *office*, possibly also in attributes and spheres of activity. We read in Zech. 1:11 of an angel of the Lord to whom others bring their report; in Dan. 10:13 of "Michael, one of the chief princes," in I Thess. 4:16 of the archangel. Paul in Eph. 1:21 and Col. 1:16 enumerates four classes of angels, viz., thrones, dominions, principalities and powers.

e. Like all of God's world, they have been created *good* (Gen. 1:31). But so far, as they are self-conscious and personal beings, they seem to have had the free choice of self-determination, like man in Paradise, and some fell into

sin (II Pet. 2:4). Those who remained steadfast, are now *holy* angels, who cannot commit sin. They have an absolute desire to do the will of God and they enjoy perfect bliss (I Tim. 5:21).

3. *Relation to Man.*

We are nowhere in Scripture told when or how angels and spirits were *created*. It would appear, that they must have come into existence before man, if a fallen angel tempted Adam and Eve to sin. Cherubim and a flaming sword were appointed to keep out the sinners from Paradise.

In some respects, the angels are represented as far *superior* to men. They are stronger and wiser, they are free from guilt and perfectly happy, they have attained to the perfection to which men will attain only through the resurrection. In other respects again, Adam's race appears to surpass the angels. The latter may not possess the same degree of individuality which man has. In the angelic manifestations, as recorded in the Bible, the outline of personality and name is generally veiled by their official employment. (Gabriel—man of God, Michael—who is like God?) The writer of the epistle to the Hebrews (2:16) declares it man's privilege, that the Son of God "doth not take hold of angels, but he taketh hold of the seed of Abraham." Paul writes in I Corinthians, that the saints shall at last "judge angels," and Peter (I Pet. 1:12), that angels desire to look into the mystery of redemption, which has been made known to man.

4. *General Work.*

The work of angels is twofold.

a. They stand in the presence of God and *worship him*. Like the servants of an earthly monarch surround their sovereign, so the heavenly host the throne of God. In rendering this service, particular mention is made of the Cherubim and Seraphim. The former, as seen by the prophet Ezechiel under the figure of a combination of lion,

eagle, ox and man, to represent the leading divisions of natural powers, appear themselves to be the living throne of God. The latter (Seraphim), as described in the vision of Isaiah (chp. 6:1-13), incessantly unite on magnifying the name of God with their: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts."

b. They execute the divine will in the *government* of the world. Some epochs of the history of Israel seem to have had frequent manifestations of angels, while others had few or none. The patriarchal age abounds in them, the time of Moses is devoid of them; the book of Judges records numerous appearances, while the period of the monarchy hardly mentions them at all. Was the angelic agency visibly employed for divine revelation mainly, when neither prophet nor the written word were available? Angels were used to execute God's judgment, as well as to establish his kingdom on earth. An angel slew the first born of Egypt (Ex. 12) and an angel smote the army of Sennacherib (II Chron. 22). The law on Mt. Sinai was "ordained through angels." The children of Israel enjoyed the special protection of the "angel of Jehovah" and the angel of his presence saved them (Isai. 63:9). Angels announced the birth of Christ the Saviour; they attended him in all his earthly life and ministry; they were seen and heard at his resurrection and ascension.

5. *Present Employment.*

But not only in the past have they been employed in the service of God, on earth. Scripture teaches, that they still continue to minister to Christ's people (Heb. 1:14). They rejoice over one sinner who repenteth (Luke 15:10). They help to bring men into touch with the Gospel of salvation, though they do not take part in preaching the Gospel (Acts 10:3). They watch over God's children (Psalm 91:11), assist and protect individual believers (Dan. 6:22). They wait for the accomplishment of the divine plan of salvation (Eph. 3:10) and at the end of days, when Christ shall

return in glory, they shall appear with him, "to gather together his elect and to gather out of his kingdom them that do iniquity" (Matth. 13:41 and 24:31).

6. *Guardian Angels and Worship of Angels.*

The belief of some, that individual men and nations have their *special guardian angels* finds little support in Scripture. The passages in Dan. 10:12, 13, cited for the latter, and Acts 12:15, for the former belief, are scarcely to the point. As regards children, Christ's word: "Their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven" (Matth. 18:10), indeed, assures us that those who are considered little among men are, nevertheless, under the constant supervision of angels who give an account of them to the most high God. It does not follow, however, that a special angel is assigned to each child or even that a particular class of angels takes care of the children.

The Roman Catholic Church teaches that angels should be *worshiped*, not indeed with the worship due to God, but "with human veneration and civil homage." The Bible furnishes no instance of angels accepting such worship, except the "prince of the host of Jehovah" who appeared to Joshua (Josh. 5:14). Testimony to the contrary is given in Rev. 19:10 and Col. 2:18.

7. *Value of the Doctrine of Angels.*

But little attention is paid in our time to the doctrine of Angels. Neither the pulpit nor private devotion seem to find in it much that is of practical use to the Christian. However, the value of what we know about the angels and its claim on our abiding interest will appear from the following considerations:

a. The angels belong to the same heavenly kingdom which we are called to inherit. It enlarges our idea of the greatness of the divine power and grace, that there is an innumerable host of spirits, to serve God in company with us.

b. We are thankful for the honor bestowed upon us, by

their being appointed to minister to our wants; and encouraged by their interest in our temporal and spiritual welfare.

c. It enlarges our conception of the dignity of man and incites us to strive more earnestly against the temptations of sin, to know that holy angels mark our failings and our victories, in the conflicts of a Christian life.

d. If angels rejoice over every sinner that repents, believers should rejoice over the sinless glory of the holy angels and join with the angelic host in the praise of a common Lord: "Bless ye the Lord, all his hosts, that do his pleasure; bless the Lord, O my soul" (Ps. 103).

CHAPTER XII. ORIGIN AND NATURE OF MAN.

1. *Origin.*

The question of the origin of man does not lie altogether outside of the domain of Christian doctrine. For according to the Bible, man originated by a special act of the creator, who formed his body out of the dust and breathed his spirit into him (Gen. 2:7). Scripture thus contradicts the theory, that man is a spontaneous product of natural forces, grown out of the soil, as taught by the ancient Stoics and by many modern naturalists. According to their theory the earth originally contained nothing but living germs, from which, in successive stages of development, by the laws of variation, natural selection and struggle for life, all the varieties of present existence have evolved, the spiritual as well as the material. The race of man, thus, in a slow but direct line of ascent, has sprung from the same source as stone, as well as plant and animal life. In so far as this theory deals only with the physical origin of the human species and does not deny the Creator, it has no direct bearing upon religion. Man's *physical* system may be derived by natural descent from the lower animals. His being formed of the dust of the ground does not determine whether the creation of the body was mediate or immediate. But the inbreathing of the

spirit and the making of man "in the image of God" calls for a special creative act.

Aside of the religious authority of the Biblical account of man's origin, the theory of an unbroken *spontaneous evolution* meets with serious objections on scientific and historical grounds. While there is an endless mingling of varieties, no instance has yet been adduced of the transformation of one animal species into another or of the body of any brute ever having developed into that of man. As far as natural science can look back, the same divisions seem to have existed. It is also an established law, that the species of higher organism, when mingled, produce no fertile offspring. Every effort at finding the missing link between the ape and man, so far, has failed. During thousands of years, since the ape has been known, he has not made the slightest progress towards becoming man. The gorilla skull has a capacity of 24—34½ inches, while the lowest man has a skull capacity of 62—114 inches, and the skull of primeval man, the contemporary of the mammoth, is as large as that of the average man of to-day. Moreover, man's self-consciousness, power of self-determination, faculty of speech and his moral sense mark him as a being radically different from the irrational creature. Hence we conclude that the Bible account of the origin of man, which indicates a pause between the creation of the animals and of man, and a special creative act in "Let us make man," is more plausible, than a spontaneous evolution from some lower animal form.

2. *Antiquity.*

A question of minor importance, in connection with the origin of man, is that of his antiquity. According to Biblical chronology, as commonly received, the advent of man on this earth would not date back much over 6000 years, whereas scientists are inclined to make it 30,000 years or more. Here mutual concessions seem possible. Some claim that it must have required countless ages to evolve the *different races* of primeval man. But variations

among domestic animals, like dogs, much more striking than those of the human races, have arisen within recent historic times. Again, the *monumental records* of Babylon and Egypt are supposed to go back far beyond the time when the Mosaic record puts the flood. But even the few early dates that are said to be fixed, like that of the Assyrian King Sargon I, at B. C. 3800, are still subject to doubt. The strongest evidence for an earlier existence of man on the earth is, doubtless, furnished by the finding of human remains in the deposits of the *glacial period*. Primeval man, using nothing but stone implements, appears to have witnessed the great changes of the earth's condition connected with the ice-age. But recent calculations are to the effect that the post-glacial time does not exceed 8000 years.

On the other hand, it is not an article of faith that Adam was created B. C. 4000. However strictly we may hold to the principle of inspiration, the Bible is not primarily intended to furnish a chronology of history. Besides, different readings in the genealogical table of Gen 11, varying in the Septuagint from the present Hebrew text and some uncertainty as to the exact meaning of the genealogy, leave room for a difference of opinion on the early Bible chronology. However, both the historical and geological records confirm the belief that the advent of man upon the earth is comparatively recent.

3. *Nature of man.*

Man is both a sensuous and a spiritual being, the crown of the earthly creation and the connecting link between the material and the spiritual world. He is appointed to have dominion over the irrational creature, both the organic and the inorganic. Nature being without self-consciousness and free agency, finds in man its interpreter. He is the representative of the earthly creation, the microcosm, a little world in himself. Light and sound, beauty and purpose are understood only by him, who is God's vice-gerent in the government of the earth (Gen. 1:26, 28).

The story of the creation speaks of man's being formed of the dust of the *ground* and of God's breathing the *breath* of life into him. This points to man's consisting of two elements, a *material* and a *spiritual* one, matter and mind. Some hold to a trichotomy (three parts) of substances in the composition of man, viz., body, soul and spirit. But it seems impossible to separate between soul and spirit as different elements or to imagine a third substance besides mind and matter. In Scripture, generally, soul and spirit are used promiscuously; what is predicated of the one, is predicated of the other. Where "spirit and soul and body" are mentioned side by side, as in I Thess. 5:23, it is evidently a paraphrase for the whole man. Spirit and soul designate the immaterial principle from different points of view. When viewed as conscious, intellectual life, it is soul (psyche); when viewed as moral and religious life, it is spirit (pneuma). "The spirit is man's nature looking Godward, the soul is man's nature looking earthward" (I Cor. 15:44). Thus it may be said, that man has a threefold relation or a threefold sphere of activity, viz., *a. a material* sphere, with which his senses bring him into contact; *b. a psychical* sphere, through his relation to the intellectual world around him; *c. a spiritual* sphere, related to matters of religious interest and concern.

4. *Unity of the Race.*

According to the Bible, all men have one common origin and are descended from one pair (Acts 17:26, I Cor. 15:22, 49). Opposite views are, either, that different species of the human race arose in different continents, or that a number of pairs, all belonging to the same species, came into existence. The Scripture statement is confirmed by the following arguments:

a. Historical. So far as the history of nations and tribes in both hemispheres can be traced, it points to a common ancestry, somewhere in Southwestern Asia.

b. Physiological. There is an essential identity of the

human races in their anatomical structure, respiration and digestion; and there is, also, permanence of propagation in the mingling of these races.

c. Psychological. All men have essentially the same mental and moral characteristics, the same faculties of memory and reason, the same sentiments of pleasure and pain, the same convictions of right and wrong.

d. Linguistic. Comparative philology points to a common origin of most of the large branches of human language or at least to certain fundamental principles in the formation of language, which are common to all.

Certainly, there are no races of men so different from the rest, that they cannot be regarded as having had the same origin. The descent of all mankind from one couple is of importance mainly for the recognition of the equality of men, the common brotherhood of all, and especially for the doctrine of sin and salvation. All men are involved in the consequences of Adam's fall, and all have a share in Christ, the Saviour, because they are members of the same human family (Rom. 5:15).

5. *Origin of the Individual Soul.*

Respecting the manner in which the individual human soul originates, Scripture is almost entirely silent. Nevertheless this question is of some importance as bearing upon our connection with Adam and has frequently been discussed. There are three main theories:

a. Preëxistence of the Soul. The philosopher Plato taught that the universe is the embodiment of eternal ideas clothed in matter. Applying this theory to the human race, the churchfather Origen held that all the souls of men have had a personal existence in a previous state and, having sinned in that state, are sent into the material body to be purified from sin. This theory directly contradicts the Scriptural account of the creation and of the fall of man.

b. Creation of the Soul. This view, which was first pro-

pounded by Jerome and Pelagius, assumes that the soul of every man is separately created, at the time of conception or at birth. It is based upon the idea that the soul being indivisible cannot be transmitted from parents to children and that the talents and the disposition of many children differ from those possessed by their parents. The objection to this theory is, that it ignores the evident reproduction of mental and moral traits in the same family and that it makes God the author of evil, in that he either creates a sinful soul or places a pure soul in a sin-stained body.

c. Propagation of the Soul or Traducian Theory, first presented by Tertullian and urged by Augustine in the controversy against Pelagius. This theory holds, that the souls of children as well as their bodies are propagated by natural generation, either so that the child-soul exists in the parent as an individual being, like the seed of plants or else as a latent force, comparable to a flame, which is kindled by another flame. The principal argument in support of this view is the undeniable fact, that individual and national traits of endowment and character are constantly transmitted. The child resembles one or both parents in their good and bad qualities and tendencies, according to the general law that like begets like. The traducian theory, however, must admit divine overruling and guidance in every part of the development of the human race.

CHAPTER XIII. THE STATE OF MANKIND IN PARADISE.

1. *The Image of God.*

With regard to the original state of mankind, there are two entirely opposite views. The one is the view of the naturalist, who holds that in the gradual ascent of man from the state of the brute, he was at first an utter savage, perhaps a cannibal, without articulate speech, without morality and without religion; the other is the view presented in the Biblical account of the creation, that man began his career endowed with intelligence and happiness,

but that he lost his original high state by apostacy from God.

We read that God created man in "his image." In what did this *image of God* consist? It is evident that it must not be sought primarily in the body, as a material quality, but in that excellence of the human nature which distinguished man from the other creatures, his natural and moral ability and endowment. As God is the absolute Spirit, so man has a spiritual element, in virtue of which he is able to understand, to feel and to will; to have self-consciousness and self-determination. Again, as God is Love,—the perfection of moral excellence,—so man is able to love and to follow moral impulses. These two characteristics, then, which constitute man a personality, mark the divine image in man. The body reflects that image of God in so far, that it is the organ of the Spirit and as such destined to share in the glory of the perfected human personality.

Sometimes the "image of God" has been defined as expressing the "original righteousness and holiness," which the first human pair possessed, but which was lost in the fall. There are two objections to this view: *a.* While man was created good, this natural goodness, in order to become holiness, first had to be tested, if holiness is rightly defined as conscious possession of goodness. *b.* Though the image of God in man was, doubtless, marred by the fall, it was not lost. For Scripture testifies, that sinful man still bears this image (Gen. 9:6, James 3:9, I Cor. 11:7).

2. *Intellectual Condition.*

Many races of men have a tradition of a "golden age" at the beginning of human development. The Mosaic record confirms the belief, that the primitive state of man was a high and happy one. It tells us, that Adam (man) was from the first endowed not only with self-consciousness, but also with a clear understanding of his surroundings. He was given dominion over the lower creation, and having

quickly gained an insight into the nature of the animals around him, he was able to give them names and to rule them. Thus he developed the faculty of *speech*. No doubt, his knowledge and his language were in every respect limited. He had no house, clothes, money or tools and no inventions were as yet made, but he had the ability to make them. He may have had to go in regular succession, from the use of stone implements, to the discovery of fire and cooking, and to the working of bronze and iron. But his original state was not one of brutish barbarism.

It is noteworthy that the ancient nations generally traced their civilization as having been brought from the east. There is also a surprising degree of art and intellectual culture in the oldest known monuments of Egypt and Babylon, and the fact that nations, like the Eskimoes and Kaffirs, have a language, wonderfully rich in grammatical forms and fine distinctions, proves that the intellectual endowment surpassed the actual attainments of the different races. Some nations, clearly, have degenerated from a higher civilization into rude savagery.

3. *Moral Condition.*

Morally man was created good. By this we understand, that his natural disposition or quality was pure and right, and the tendency of his affection and will, fundamentally good. He lived in communion with his Creator and did what was right in childlike innocence. The assertion of naturalists, that the religious history of mankind universally has progressed from fetichism through polytheism, to monotheism, is unproven. So far as it does rest on facts, these can be accounted for on the ground of religious degeneracy after the fall. But man had not as yet made use of his free will and he had no knowledge of evil. His morality was not yet a personal possession because it had not been tested. The Roman Catholic teaching, that original man had in him an antagonism between the body and the spirit, which needed an adjustment, and that the

remedy was furnished in a supernatural gift of special grace, afterwards lost by the fall, finds no confirmation in Scripture.

4. *Physical Condition.*

Physically, also, man must have had a good start. While the brute creation is downward bent, looking at the ground from which it originated, man's posture was erect; he looked aloft, as well as beneath and around him and his features expressed his higher attributes and aspirations. His body, as originally constituted, must have been vigorous, full of the joy of health, well fitted to share in the spirit's dominion over nature. There was no conflict between body and spirit, the sensuous impulses being in perfect submission to the control of the spirit. Yet the physical state of man was not *final*. The body was material and therefore perishable. Death was an existing possibility, but it did not threaten man as long as he remained near the divine source of life, of which the "tree of life" was the emblem. Perhaps the material body was to be raised gradually to a higher state of existence, and thus changed or transfigured into the spiritual body of the resurrection, of which Paul writes in I Cor. 15:51, 53.

5. *Exercise of Man's Powers.*

The story of the creation, in the book of Genesis, also records what provision was made by the Creator for the exercise of man's faculties and powers. He was given a home in a pleasant, garden-like region of the earth, called Eden (delight) or Paradise (a park). His work was to dress and keep this garden by cultivating the ground, by planting flowers and trees and raising crops of grain; and this exercise of the body would, at the same time, be to him a source of joy, vigor and beauty. His *intellectual* faculties were to be developed by the exercise of inventive thought and imagination and by the gradual enlargement of the power of speech. Exercise for his *moral* and spiritual

powers was furnished by daily intercourse with God, whatever the form of that intercourse may have been, and by the test of his willing obedience through a commandment. For there could be no conscious morality and no true worship of God without a personal decision in the exercise of free will.

An important factor in this human development was the establishment of the human *family*. The formation of woman marks the beginning of the history of our race. The sexual polarity of husband and wife found a higher harmony in the relation of father, mother and child. This human family was destined, by the law of propagation and association, to grow into a nation, and to become the Kingdom of God on earth which, as Christ has taught us, was being "prepared from the foundation of the world" (Matth. 25:34).

Part Second—Sin.

CHAPTER XIV. EVIL SPIRITS.

1. *Their Existence.*

The course of the happy development of the human race was interrupted by the appearance of sin and evil in the world, and this evil, according to the Scriptures, must be traced to the existence of an evil spirit, prior to the fall of man.

The books of the Old Testament make but a few references to an evil power, but in the New Testament we find frequent mention of fallen angels or demons, and especially of one called *Satan* (the enemy) or *Devil* (diabolos, deceiver or slanderer).

The existence of such evil spirits is doubted or *rejected* in our days by many, on the following grounds:

a. This belief, they say, is a creation of superstition and a remnant of barbarism. The more ignorant men are, the more they are afraid of evil spirits and this fear decreases in proportion to their enlightenment.

b. Almighty God could not permit the continued existence of creatures who have become apostate and who constantly oppose him. And the evil spirits themselves must know the power of God and could not continue their rebellion, without realizing the folly of their efforts.

c. The belief in a devil degrades man by representing him as a slave of Satan; and it is morally hurtful, because it transfers the blame of human sin to the being who tempts man.

In *reply* to these *arguments* we must urge the following considerations:

a. There must be some real foundation for this general belief in the existence of evil spirits, which is as universal as

the belief in God. It is a part of the inner consciousness of the most enlightened Christians and confirmed by their religious experience, as it also furnishes the most reasonable explanation of the fall of Adam.

b. If almighty God has permitted the wickedness of sinful man to continue for thousands of years and if the human intelligence can be so perverted by sin as to continue in disobedience and rebellion against God to the present day, why should that be impossible with evil spirits?

e. Neither Scripture nor conscience allow temptation by the devil to be an excuse for sin, or to regard Satan as having power to control man without his will. We are taught that it is man's own fault, if he yields to the devil (Matth. 15:19). Experience proves that belief in the personality of the devil makes sin to be more abhorred, while giving up this belief is apt to lead to laxity.

d. According to the New Testament, it is certain that Christ and the apostles taught the existence of Satan and of evil spirits. To declare this teaching an accommodation to popular belief or a simple personification of evil passions and principles, is incompatible with the plain statements of the Gospels. While the expression: "he has a demon" may have been used in the sense of, "he is insane," Christ's own references to the devil, both in public and private teaching are so explicit, that they cannot be explained away as figurative (Matth. 12:28, Luke 10:18, John 8:44). This fact, however, does not exclude the possibility of impersonal powers being used by a personal agent, even as men use guns and dynamite to kill.

2. *The Origin of Evil.*

But, if there are evil spirits, how did the evil in them originate? It is an axiom of Christian belief that the origin of evil cannot lie in God. He never tempts to evil, though he brings to light the hidden sin within (James 1:13). All that we can say is, that the abstract possibility of evil is implied in the gift of a *free will* to the creature, because

such freedom of thought or action necessarily involves a self-limitation of the divine will. Freedom of choice on the part of the creature, therefore, implies the logical alternative of either doing or not doing the will of God, loving God, or not loving him, being with God or without him. If any creature, in the exercise of this prerogative of rational beings, instead of yielding a loving obedience to the Creator, chooses to live for himself, such determination would be identical with doing evil. How the abstract possibility ever became an actuality, how an evil volition arose in spirits created pure, is an unsolved mystery.

Respecting the *nature* of this sin and apostacy of the devil and his angels, we would infer from the nature of spiritual sin among men, that it was *pride*, the desire to be like God, self-deification, a transgression of the first and greatest commandment: "I am the Lord, thy God" (Gen. 3:5, Tim. 3:6). If the spirit-world is not bound together by the tie of blood-relationship, like the human race, the apostacy of one angel could not bring on the apostacy of others, except through personal counsel and example. Jewish theology, and some Church fathers, held that God had entrusted to certain angels different provinces of dominion and that some, becoming discontented with their position, formed a rebellious league with each other. This theory seeks to account for the connection of Satan and the evil spirits with our earth in particular; but its supposed scriptural support in the epistle of Jude, v. 6, is very slight.

Some, on the ground of II Pet. 2:4 and 5, in connection with Gen. 6:1-4, have assumed, that a second apostacy took place in the spirit-world after the fall of Adam and Eve, through the sin of sensuality. Thus in the spirit-world, as among men, sin would manifest itself in the twofold form of *pride* and *lust*. The designation of "unclean spirits," the fact that men appear to be tempted by the devil to sins of impurity, as well as of pride, and the occurrence of demoniacal possessions would lend some weight, at least, to the general idea of a twofold type of diabolical sin.

3. *Nature of Evil Spirits.*

The evil spirits are banded together in a community, called the Kingdom of Satan, in opposition to the Kingdom of God. Satan or the Devil appears to be superior in rank and power to the other spirits (Matth. 12:26). To him are applied also such names as Belial (worthless) and Beelzebul (Lord of the dwelling) or Beelzebub (Lord of flies) (II Cor. 6:15, Matth. 12:24). His subjects or associates, the evil spirits, are frequently called demons, a term which in Greek mythology stood for ministering spirits, employed in the government of the world. The Jews who held that the gentile world was ruled by Satan, under the name of Zeus, or Baal, or Jupiter, naturally regarded these demons as servants or emissaries of the evil one. The Apostle Paul, in Ephesians 6:12, distinguishes "principalities, powers, world-rulers of darkness and spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places."

If the origin of evil, with Satan and his subjects, lies within themselves, we must infer that sin is the *controlling motive* of these spirits, their very nature. Christ called the devil a "murderer from the beginning—a liar and the father thereof" (John 8:44) and the Apostle John wrote: "the devil sinneth from the beginning" (I John 3:8). As will and intellect are closely connected, we must suppose that the apostacy of the will from God was followed by a blinding of the understanding, so that these spirits do not see the folly of their wickedness. On the other hand, we are taught that they possess great energy and power, which they use altogether for hindering or destroying every good work.

As to their personal condition, we are led to believe that it must be one of great unhappiness, because of their being entirely separated from God who is the source of all true felicity. But on these points we have no authoritative declaration in Holy Scripture.

4. *General Activity.*

Satan and his angels are represented as thoroughly active in making war against the works of God. Especially does the world of man appear to be their field of operation. According to Scripture, it was Satan who caused Adam and Eve to fall into sin (Rev. 12:9), and ever since the fall, he and his associates have endeavored to gain control and to extend their dominion over this sinful world. It is for this reason, that Christ called Satan the prince of this world (John 14:30), not because he is the rightful owner, but because he exercises dominion over fallen humanity. Wherever sin reigns, there Satan and the evil spirits reign. They strive to defeat the will of God and they hinder man's temporal and eternal welfare.

The working of evil spirits is represented as being partly of an *ordinary* and partly of an *extraordinary* or supernatural character. Scripture tells us that this special and extraordinary influence is exerted upon the physical, the mental and the spiritual sphere of man's life.

a. Physical. The great affliction and severe illness which tried the patience and faith of Job is traced to Satan's having received special permission to injure him. Paul's "thorn in the flesh was caused by a messenger of Satan to buffet" him (II Cor. 12:7).

b. Mental (psychical). There are many instances mentioned in the Bible of a supernatural influence upon the intellectual faculties of certain men, causing a complete or a partial loss of reason and power of will; as in the case of Saul, when he raved; of the false prophets and sorcerers (Acts 16:16), who had a spirit of divination, and especially of the "possessed" and lunatics who were healed by Christ.

c. Spiritual. Sometimes the attack is made directly upon the religious and moral part of man, by Satan's taking possession of the heart of man, as in the case of Judas and of Ananias (Acts 5:3).

The ultimate object of such special and extraordinary attacks upon certain men, on the part of the devil, must have

been, if possible, to destroy body, soul and spirit. The occasion for it may sometimes have been the commission of some particular sin. But in other cases it appears as a simple affliction, a disease, which needs healing. The frequency of men suffering under this affliction at the time of the earthly ministry of Christ may be accounted for on the ground, that when the Redeemer of men came, Satan increased his efforts, in order to hinder the work of redemption. He was permitted to do so, because this special manifestation of the evil power resulted in a greater manifestation of the saving power of Christ.

5. *Relation to Christians.*

If, what is recorded in the Bible concerning the activity of the devil and of evil powers in the past, is accepted as true, the question may be asked, whether that activity has not come to an end, when Christ, our Saviour, delivered fallen man from the power of the evil one. The apostles teach that such is not the case, but that the devil and his associates still seek to *hinder* men from entering Christ's kingdom or, after they have entered, seek to make them apostates. In this endeavor they use either cunning, "Satan fashioning himself into an angel of light" (II Cor. 11:14), or else violence, "the devil walking about as a roaring lion" (I Pet. 5:8). Paul in I Thess. 2:18 writes about Satan hindering his coming to Thessalonica, and on many occasions, in the course of the history of the Christian Church, since the days of the apostles, have servants of Christ been convinced, that the obstacles put in the way of the spread of Christ's Kingdom and the persecutions which have come upon believers, though directly attributable to evil men, must be traced to the instigation of evil spirits. It seems to be well proven that demoniacal possession, such as is recorded in the Bible, does occur occasionally in our own time, especially in connection with missions among the heathen.

Above all, the evil influence of Satan still manifests itself in certain *temptations* to sin to which believers and un-

believers are subject in our days, as well as of old; as Paul writes in Eph. 6:11 and 12, "Our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities... against the spiritual hosts of wickedness." But James gives the admonition: "Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you" (James 4:7). Watchfulness, earnest prayer and the right use of the Word of God are the appointed weapons against all the assaults of evil spirits.

6. *Witchcraft and Sorcery.*

During the Middle Ages and to the end of the seventeenth century, it was the general belief, that wicked men could make a compact with Satan whereby, for a season, they were endowed with supernatural power, upon the condition that, after death, their souls be given over to perdition. Through these witches and sorcerers, it was thought, the devil exercised a great sway both over the elements of nature and over the minds and bodies of men. Upon this belief rested the prosecutions and convictions for witchcraft and sorcery, which form one of the most deplorable episodes in human history. While this superstition in its unchristian and cruel form is fortunately a thing of the past, the idea of a special connection of evil spirits with pretended sorcery, witchcraft and even spiritualism in our day still has a strong hold on the popular mind. The Mosaic Law recognized the belief in sorcery to this extent, that it put the death penalty on those who pretended to be witches and who "turned after familiar spirits" (Ex. 22:18, Lev. 20:6). In the book of Acts, we read, that Christian converts from the heathen who had "practiced curious arts, brought their books together and burned them" (Acts 19:19).

While, therefore, the possibility of sorcery and witchcraft, as connected with evil spirits, may not be denied, yet, in view of the terrible abuse to which this belief has led men and women in the past, we should be slow to assume

an immediate working of the evil power, as long as natural causes suffice to account for strange occurrences.

7. *Value of the Doctrine of Evil Spirits.*

In spite of all that has been said and of the direct testimony of the Holy Scriptures, some Christians have no use whatever for the doctrine of evil spirits. While it has rightly been said that our salvation depends not upon belief in the devil, but upon belief in Christ, yet the following points deserve consideration for the right *valuation* of this doctrine:

a. It is of great importance for the proper understanding of the nature of sin as being not simply traceable to human weakness, but to a personal author and head in the spirit-world.

b. It shows us the greatness of the work of salvation, as a gracious redemption from the power of the evil one.

c. The more clearly we understand the abomination and the dangerous character of sin, as a rebellion against God, the more earnestly will the battle against sin be fought and the more sure is the prospect of a final complete victory over sin.

CHAPTER XV. THE FALL OF MAN.

1. *The Nature of Human Sin.*

The existence of human sin is an undeniable fact. There is general agreement as to certain acts, words and thoughts being wrong and the sin offerings which have been brought among all nations, from time immemorial, are an acknowledgment of human consciousness of sin. But what is that, what we call "sin?" Is it a substance or a principle, a condition or an act?

a. *Sensuous theory.* Without considering the theory that sin is equivalent to matter, which is contrary to Bible teaching, and entirely destroys the moral aspect of good and evil, we first have to consider the *sensuous* theory,

which regards sin as the necessary product of man's sensuous nature. This view is partly founded on a misunderstanding of the use of the word "flesh" in Romans 8 and elsewhere. It defines sin as the predominance of the appetites of the body over the higher, spiritual part of man. But, according to Scripture, the most sinful beings are evil spirits, and if the *body* only were the seat of sin, its decay in old age ought to make a man virtuous, while in reality the aged sinner gets hardened in pride and unbelief. Above all, if sin were an inherent attribute of our physical nature, God in being the author of our bodily organism, would be the responsible originator of human sin.

b. Limitation theory. This theory explains sin as a necessary result of the limitations of man's finite being: "God alone is perfect, because he is infinite; no created being can be perfect. When God created the world, he made man weak and liable to error, because the creature cannot be otherwise. Hence sin is identical with limitation and weakness and a necessary attribute of humanity." But if such were the case, sin ought to be an object of pity and not of condemnation before God. This view of sin contradicts both conscience and Scripture, by denying human responsibility and putting the blame of sin on the Creator.

c. Antagonistic theory. Some contend that all life, the moral as well as the physical, moves in contrasts. As there is no light without a shadow, there can be no goodness without its counterpart—badness, or sin. The moral world without any wrong-doing would be a stagnant pool without commotion, a monotonous harmony without the discord of sin. Sin is the necessary disharmony which leads to a higher harmony, therefore an element in human education and a means of progress. But if sin were the mother of holiness, God would have ordained the existence of something which he now punishes. Compare Paul's declaration, Rom. 3:8, "as some affirm that we say, Let us do evil, that good may come; whose condemnation is just."

d. Scriptural definition. While it can be said that all men have a vague consciousness of sin as an evil, a defect or a crime, there seems to be no proper conception of the nature of sin outside of the sphere of revealed religion. For there can be no proper definition of sin which makes no reference to a personal God. According to the testimony of Scripture, which is confirmed by the Christian conscience, sin is 1st. *Alienation from God* and 2d. *Transgression of the law of God*. Comp. Rom. 8:7, "The carnal mind is enmity against God," and I John 3:4, "Sin is the transgression of the law."

Sin has reference to a *law* which represents the will of God. The creature must live and act in conformity with the will of the Creator—must obey God. Sin means disregard of that will, disobedience, *transgression* of God's law.

As the lawgiver and his law are inseparable, *God himself* is the proper center of the life of the creature, the center around which the thought, feeling and volition of the creatures must revolve. Sin means the opposite tendency, a mode of existence in which the place of God is usurped by the creature. The sinner is out of harmony with God, alienated from him, ungodly. Sin is self-love, self-seeking, *selfishness*.

2. *The Temptation.*

The existence of sin in the world of man calls for an explanation of its origin. Reason affords no light on this question, but the Bible, in the third chapter of Genesis, gives an account of how our first parents lost their state of communion with God, through Satan's temptation and their disobedience to the divine commandment. While this account, in its childlike simplicity, may contain some symbolical features, there is no reason for declaring it a mere allegory or a myth. It certainly furnishes the most rational explanation of the present condition of man. Christ and the apostles repeatedly refer to it as a historical fact and

we may well accept it as true in all its essential parts. The record speaks of two trees in the garden of Eden which, by divine appointment, had a peculiar significance, the one, the tree of life, an emblem of man's communion with God and a pledge of immortal life, the other, the tree of knowledge, the emblem of man's freedom of choice, with regard to his relation to the Creator. God forbade the eating of its fruit. He did not forbid the knowledge of good and evil but gave the commandment, in order to evoke the free obedience of man. It was the experimental knowledge of evil which Adam and Eve were to avoid. They were to learn to know the good as something which they, by their own free choice, desired and practiced, and the evil as a possibility which they did not desire and would not admit into their being. As the medium of probation was a tree, so the instrument of temptation was a serpent, so that both the animal and the vegetable world were involved in the fall. But the serpent was simply a disguise of Satan, the evil spirit, as was later made plain to man (John 8:44, II Cor. 11:3, Rev. 12:9).

The temptation is described as having proceeded in three stages, viz., first, *exaggeration* of the prohibition and doubt with regard to its meaning; second, direct *denial* of its truth and a *promise*; third, the awakening of *pride* and *lust*. By presenting the fruit of the tree to the eye, the sensuous nature was appealed to, while the prospect of independence and knowledge ("be as God" and "desired to make wise") was calculated to rouse a feeling of self-will and conceit. Thus man fell inwardly, before the outward act was committed. Allowing self to take the place of God, gave rise to desire and desire led to the act of transgression (James 1:15, Gen. 3:1-6). Eve ate of the forbidden fruit. Adam followed her example and thus through the parentage of self-will and desire, sin was born into the world of man. How it was possible, that the first evil inclination found lodgment in the pure heart of man, we are, indeed, unable to explain. But the Biblical account

of the origin of human sin is the best that has ever been given.

3. *Immediate Effects of the Fall.*

Adam and Eve, at once, realized the difference between good and evil, by finding themselves in the evil. They had become their own gods, by being inwardly separated from the grace of the Creator; but all that they had gained was a feeling of shame and fear. Their conscience was disturbed by the sense of spiritual disgrace and loss of the proper balance, in the spirit's rule over the impulses of sense. The higher element in man had followed the suggestions of the lower, animal, nature and Adam and Eve felt that they were now no longer able to control their appetites which, hitherto pure and good, had become perverse. This consciousness of disorder produced the feeling of shame which, in turn, resulted in the feeling of guilt and fear.

With this internal effect of the fall came a realization of the outward consequences of sin, as expressed in the story of the divine judgment, which followed the fall and in the sentence of *trouble, disease and death* pronounced upon the sinners. That physical death, in the sense of change, decay and dissolution of the body, was in this world before the appearance of man and therefore before the entrance of sin, seems to be an established fact. Whether or not the apparent physical suffering and death in the animal creation is explained on the ground of a judicial anticipation of the entrance of sin, as some think (Rom. 8:21, 22), it is evident that the nature of man's body as formed of earthly materials implied the possibility of mortality or dissolution from the first. But what was only possible, became actual, when the soul was no longer able to spiritualize the body and when sinful man was cut off from approach to the "tree of life" (Gen. 3:19, 22).

4. *Why was the Fall not Prevented?*

Here the question is often raised: Why was Satan permitted to tempt man? and, could not the creator have given

the needful power of resisting the temptation? Some have made the reply, that sin was evidently a necessity for bringing about the desired progress of the human race or for the final increase of man's happiness, because he would never have known the depth of the love and mercy of God, had he not fallen into sin. But as it is an axiom of Christian faith, that the holy God cannot ordain sin in order to effect good by it, we cannot accept that reply. The cause of the temptation and of Adam's fall, must lie in man's freedom and the need of a conscious choice between Good and Evil. Man made his choice contrary to the will of God.

We may say, however, that the Creator *made provision* for the eventuality of man's fall in various ways:

a. He created man a *physico-spiritual* being, in which the human personality but gradually grows into full consciousness and corresponding responsibility. Accordingly the Fall of man was not the apostacy of a fixed personality and a fully determined will. It was a sin of weakness rather than of presumption.

b. By allowing the temptation to approach man *from without*, God lessened the effects of the Fall and prevented an absolute ruin. It was the mitigating circumstance of man's Fall, that his sin did not originate within himself.

c. The *body* of man, while it was a factor in the transgression, also helped to *divert* the worst consequences of sin through sickness, suffering and death. Furthermore, as the physical part in man was the medium of temptation, it has also been made the medium of salvation, through the incarnation of Christ and through the preaching of the Gospel.

d. Although we dare not say that man will eventually attain to a higher objective felicity through his Fall, his *subjective* enjoyment of salvation may be heightened, by his having tasted the bitterness of sin and having learned to know Christ as the Saviour from sin.

CHAPTER XVI. UNIVERSALITY AND GUILT OF SIN.

1. *The Inherited Depravity.*

The effects and consequences of the Fall were not confined to our first ancestors. They have influenced the entire race of man. How the first sin gave rise to the sins of countless millions of mankind, on this point the Bible gives us no information. It simply states the fact, that there is a causal connection between Adam's transgression and the sins of his descendants. In particular does Paul in Rom. 5:12 declare, that "through one man sin entered into the world and death through sin; and so death passed unto all men, for that all sinned," and in v. 19: "through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners." The nature of the connection between the first Fall and the sins of Adam's posterity is not stated and we may not be able to explain it, but the results of the inheritance are clearly taught here and elsewhere in Scripture and confirmed by experience.

Both in the Old and the New Testaments man's present nature is defined as "*flesh*" (Gen. 6:3 and John 3:6). Man has lost the true spiritual life. His physical and his moral activity are no longer ruled by the spirit, but by the flesh. The leading attributes of this state of man—the natural human character—are designated, on the one hand, as *weakness*, physical and spiritual infirmity, on the other hand, as positive *enmity* against *spiritual* and divine things. And this inherited corruption is coextensive with humanity, however different in degree it may be. All men are liable to disease and death and all are sinners. The natural tendency of every man is to be selfish, to live for himself rather than to love God and to live for God (Rom. 5:14 and 8:7). This is what is sometimes called "original sin" (*peccatum originale*), because it is accounted for on the ground of inheritance from the first ancestors and clings to every individual human being as a member of the race.

The use of the term “original sin” however, is objectionable as liable to misunderstanding.

2. *The Pelagian Heresy.*

The doctrine of a universal depravity of the human race and of the connection of the prevailing corruption with Adam’s Fall was first openly denied by the British monk *Pelagius*, who taught that sin is not propagated and that the fall of our first parents has exercised no prejudicial influence on their posterity. All men are born in a state of innocence, possess the power of free will and may therefore live without sin, if they earnestly strive to do so. They are by nature neither holy nor sinful, except that children now born are exposed to evil influences by precept and example. Sin is not a condition or natural state, but only a voluntary act. God does not require more than man can do. Hence only a deliberate choice of evil is sinful.

This Pelagian heresy was condemned by the Council of Carthage, A.D. 412, the Church having fully endorsed the teaching of Augustine, that Adam’s sin made all his posterity sinful and alienated from God. However, the declaration of some Church Fathers, that man, born in sin, can do absolutely nothing that is good, stirred up new opposition, which took shape in the so-called *Semipelagian* doctrine. It held, that the effect of Adam’s sin was to make the body mortal and the soul inclined to evil, but the sinner is able to begin the work of conversion by co-operating with the grace of God, in gaining salvation and sanctification. Semipelagianism, also, was condemned by several Church councils as a heresy, although the Roman Catholic Church before the Reformation in the sixteenth century, practically, taught it almost everywhere. However, the Reformers and the Catholic Council of Trent again took their stand on the Augustinian doctrine, as taught in the Bible and confirmed by Christian consciousness.

3. *The Universality of Sin.*

The points comprised under the general head of universal depravity appear to be the following:

a. It is coextensive with the race. All men are infected with sin. We are a race of sinners. No tribe, family or individual is entirely free from the contamination. There is no place found, where sin is not and none from which it can be excluded. We have no record of any human being that is or was without fault or sin. The universality of sin offerings among pagan nations testifies to the general conviction of man in regard to this fact. The Old Testament ritual is based upon the supposition that all men are guilty of transgression and the testimony of Holy Scripture both in the Old and New Testament is plain and emphatic. Compare I Kings 8:46, "There is no man that sinneth not;" Rom. 3:23, "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God;" I John 1:10, "If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."

b. It is a radical evil. We need not endorse the declaration of Augustine that "all the virtues of the heathen are but shining vices." Men are not all equally wicked or altogether destitute of moral worth. They are certainly able to distinguish between right and wrong, to choose the good and to reject the evil. Some are naturally "righteous," pure and unselfish. But they all have the *taint of sin* in the form of a corrupt germ or tendency and this is a radical evil, a poison that has penetrated to the very core of man's being. It is impossible to get rid of it. Men have subjected themselves to painful discipline, they have withdrawn from society, they have made every effort to eradicate the evil tendency; all to no avail.

c. It is propagated by heredity. That this universal and deep-rooted corruption in its twofold manifestation of sin and death stands in connection with the fall of Adam and Eve, is distinctly taught in Rom. 5:12, 18. It is propagated from generation to generation. It shows itself in early *childhood*, before example or precept have influenced the

child either way. As soon as the child becomes capable of any moral manifestation, a tendency to self-will, envy and anger is likely to be noticed and the natural development, if left to itself, is worldly and not godly (Ps. 51:5). We inherit from our ancestors not only their bodily peculiarities and mental qualities, but also the moral and religious disposition. Repeated sins, which have become fixed habits, are thus transmitted to the descendants, so that the children come into the world with a disordered nature. They also come into a world, where sin abounds and are affected by the sinful environment, which is a part of our race inheritance. Thus the fall of Adam has affected all his posterity physically, intellectually and spiritually. The entire race is implicated in the consequences of Adam's sin.

4. *Theories of Imputation.*

A question much debated among theologians has been that of the "Imputation of Adam's sin" in other words, the question whether all men are held responsible—liable to condemnation—for this inherited depravity or not? The term Imputation comes from the Vulgate Translation of Rom. 5:12, 13 "in quo imputantur," but there is no agreement as to the exact meaning attached to the word. The principal theories on Imputation are the following:

a. Natural Head Theory (Augustine). It holds, that God imputes the sin of Adam to all his posterity in virtue of the organic unity by which the whole race at the time of Adam's transgression existed enclosed in their common ancestor, like the oak-tree in the acorn. The total life of humanity was then in Adam and his will was that of the race. All humanity acted responsibly in him.

b. Federal Head Theory (Cocceius of Leyden, +1669). According to this theory Adam was constituted by God's appointment the *representative* of the whole human race. With Adam God entered into a covenant, in accordance with which God accounts all his descendants as sinners because of Adam's transgression. As the head of a nation is

held responsible for the people and the latter for their ruler, thus Adam's posterity is punished for the breaking of the covenant on the part of the federal head of the human race.

c. Preëxistence Theory (Origen). Some who believe that man existed in another state, before he was born into this material world, claim that all men have voluntarily and individually sinned against God, in that preëxistent state, and are now burdened with the guilt of sin committed in the spirit, before their earthly birth.

d. Mediate Imputation Theory (Placeus of Saumur, +1655). Some deny all direct imputation of Adam's sin, but believe in an indirect or mediate imputation. We inherit a corrupt nature and sinful tendencies and it is this hereditary taint which makes us guilty before God. Adam's sin is not imputed to us in Adam, but *in ourselves*, because the inborn depravity is the source of all actual sin. Not the wickedness of sin, but the liability to punishment is imputed.

e. No Imputation. Many theologians, to whom none of the preceding theories seemed satisfactory, have entirely discarded the idea of an imputation of guilt on account of Adam's fall. Leaving out of consideration the Pelagian error that there *is* no such thing as inherited depravity, both the *Arminian* and the "*New School*" (New England) theologians have rejected the imputation of Adam's guilt, the former holding that the depraved nature of the descendants does not in itself involve guilt, unless consciously appropriated, the latter that nothing can be properly called sin except a voluntary act of transgression.

5. *The Question of Responsibility.*

As already stated, the advocates of the doctrine of imputation base their arguments mainly upon St. Paul's teaching in Rom. 5:12-21, and much can be said in favor of both the theories, of the natural and of the federal headship of Adam. We see the principle of representation exemplified

throughout the entire course of history. God's moral government in dispensing sufferings and happiness, judges nations as an organic whole. Compare Ex. 34:7, "visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children," also Jerem. 32:18, and the self-imprecation of the Jews: "His blood be on us and on our children," bitterly fulfilled in their descendants. Children do bear the iniquity of their fathers. But, does that prove that the children are responsible for the iniquity of their fathers? Will a righteous God hold the generation of men now born into the world guilty for the sin committed by Adam and Eve, because it has been transmitted to them? Could the God of love condemn a soul to eternal punishment because of the involuntary inheritance of a depraved nature? That is utterly at variance with our conception of God.

We must keep in view the *twofold position* of man. On the one hand, he is a *free agent*, personally accountable, an individual being created after the image of God; on the other hand, he is but a *small part* of the human race, limited and influenced by heredity and environment. All men, as descended from one pair and members of the same family, share in the hereditary taint of sin and the hereditary taint of suffering, in ungodly tendencies and desires, in lack of true understanding and in physical weakness and disease. This corrupt or disordered nature debars the natural man from communion with the holy God and excludes him from the kingdom of heaven. But *personal guilt* and punishment for guilt can be attributed or imputed only, where there is personal assent to the evil, as is also taught in Scripture. Compare Ezek. 18:20, "The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father," Jer. 31:30, "Every one shall die for his own iniquity." Accordingly, the inherited corruption unfits man for heaven, but does not as such condemn him to punishment. If the Son of God had not come to redeem mankind, it would be a ques-

tion, what becomes of children who die before they have committed any conscious sin and yet are separated from God by their natural depravity. But now the question of imputation is of no practical consequence, as Paul writes in Rom. 5:19, "As through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the one shall the many be made righteous." As the righteousness of Christ does not save us, unless we personally receive and appropriate it, so Adam's sin does not condemn us, unless we have made it our own.

6. Personal Guilt.

With the awakening of moral consciousness begins the responsibility for transgression. Whether the voice of conscience is heard before, warning us not to yield to the evil tendency or whether that voice speaks only after the evil is committed, we feel guilty of sin, irrespective of any inherited depravity. To a greater or less extent, all men, beginning at childhood, consent by free choice to the temptations which come to them from their disordered nature and sinful surroundings. Some, indeed, appear to be born into a state of greater corruption than others, so that their personal responsibility is lessened.

It exceeds our power of discrimination, to decide how much of the sin committed is due to heredity and environment, and how much to free choice. Accordingly, we cannot determine the measure of personal guilt in other men, and especially among the heathen. We cannot even judge ourselves. But under the new covenant, (the covenant of salvation,) there is but one sin which actually and definitely condemns the sinner, viz., a willful rejection of the offer of salvation in Christ Jesus (John 3:36).

CHAPTER XVII. THE GROWTH OF SIN AND ITS SUCCESSIVE STAGES.

1. *Not all Equally Sinful.*

The universal depravity of mankind does not exclude grades in sinfulness. There are men who know nothing of redeeming grace and yet are naturally good, well disposed and honest. It can be said of them that they are “not far from the kingdom of God” (Mark 12:34), while others seem very depraved. There are those who may be called virtuous, and there may even be a progress in the direction of righteousness, though, as a rule, the tendency is toward increased transgression, indifference and spiritual blindness. The term “total depravity” which is frequently applied to all unconverted men, if it is to express a state of utter wickedness, is hardly appropriate.

We find whole families, and even tribes of men, in whom honesty, sobriety, and a certain religiousness seem to be a hereditary possession, while in others sin has attained a luxuriant growth and produces the most abominable vices. Piety and morality can be improved by training and example. Environments, even the climate, have much to do with the manifestation of either sin or righteousness. Furthermore, special visitations of grace or of discipline, provided by the educational wisdom of God, frequently put a check upon the gross outbursts of sin, and moral reformations are frequently brought about in nations, as well as in individuals, after they have been, for a time, totally given over to the practice of sin.

2. *The Power of Sin.*

While, therefore, the natural man is not always as depraved as he might be, yet standing, as he does, in a false relation to God, the main purpose of his life is wrong. His virtue does not satisfy the demands of perfect righteousness and holiness, and cannot be acceptable to God. The sinful corruption within operates like a poison, spreading

itself simultaneously with the growth of consciousness. The heart, the fountain of life, is ungodly; accordingly the conscience is being defiled, the spiritual understanding is dimmed and the will is enslaved to sin. The body also yields its members as "instruments of unrighteousness" (Rom. 6:13). Every outbreak of sin prepares the way for another outbreak, as sin begets sin. The evil propensity waxes stronger, while the restraining power grows weaker.

3. *Classification of Sins.*

It is customary to distinguish between gross sins and light sins, and this distinction has some foundation in John 19:11, "he hath greater sin," and in Luke 12:48, "shall be beaten with few stripes," etc. However, since God alone knows the heart and all the conditions and circumstances which shape a man's course, he only can decide which sins are really gross or light, great or small.

As to the manifestations of sin, we distinguish between sins of lust and sins of pride. The former result from man's degrading himself beneath the sphere assigned to him, to the level of the brute, the latter from his trying to raise himself above his station and thus running the risk of becoming a devil. Compare I John 2:16, "the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes and the vain glory of life," and I Tim. 3:6, "lest being puffed up he fall into the condemnation of the devil."

Other classifications of sins are: *a.* Sins against God, against our neighbor and against ourselves. *b.* Sins of commission and omission. *c.* Sins in thought, word and deed. *d.* Sins of ignorance and sins of presumption, that is, wilfully committed.

The Roman Church, in addition, distinguishes between what are called venial sins (*peccata venalia*) and mortal sins (*peccata mortalia*), a distinction based upon I John 5:16. Mortal sins, they say, are those that "subvert the end of the law," venial or pardonable sins only "divert" the end of God's law to some extent. We hold that every

sin unpardoned is mortal, and that all sins are pardonable, since Christ has died for all, provided they are repented of.

4. *Stages of Sin.*

In the growth and development of sin, we can distinguish four successive stages which follow upon each other in natural order.

a. The first is the state of *discord*. It arises from the disharmony between the sinful tendency and the spiritual desire in man. The natural man may live for a shorter or longer time without becoming aware of any such discord. The law of God is not revealed to the heart, as Paul writes: "I had not known sin, except through the law... and I was alive apart from the law once" (Rom. 7:7, 9). But then there is a conflict going on within, between the dictates of conscience on the one hand and evil desires on the other hand, as Paul expresses it in Rom. 7:14, "we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin."

b. *Slavery*. The result of this conflict, as a rule, is spiritual bondage. The sinful tendency prevails. After a short struggle man becomes a captive to a hostile power. He is compelled to do what he feels to be wrong, although conscience upbraids him. Rom. 7:19, "For the good which I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I practice."

c. *False Security*. The oftener a man thus acts against better knowledge, the less and less vigorous the resisting power and the protest of conscience become. Sinful acts produce sinful habits, and sinful habits form a sinful character. The evil strikes deeper roots in the will, as well as in the perception and feeling of the sinner, resulting in a condition of spiritual indifference, which in Scripture is referred to under the figure of a deep sleep or even of death. Eph. 5:14, "Awake thou that sleepest and arise from the dead."

d. *Hardening of heart*. The last stage in this downward progress is that of positive unwillingness to be roused from

the state of indifference, a state of conscious hardening of the heart against the divine testimony. Often the sinner is drawn out of this condition by divine chastisement or mercy; but if it continues unchecked, the sleep of sin can only end in spiritual death. Sin gains complete control over the sinner who loses the faculty for repentance. He takes delight in the evil as such and eventually becomes entirely identified with sin. He commits the sin to which our Saviour refers as the unpardonable sin.

5. *Sin against the Holy Spirit.*

When the Pharisees, with deliberate falsehood, ascribed the works of healing performed by Christ to the power of the devil, they were warned not to blaspheme against the Holy Spirit, because "whosoever shall speak against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world nor in that which is to come" (Matth. 12:32). The context of the passage quoted and the general declarations of Scripture on this point make it plain, that the Sin against the Holy Spirit is not to be regarded as an isolated act, but as the culmination of a long course of *self-hardening*. The blasphemous words of Christ's enemies were an evidence of deliberate opposition and conscious rejection of the salvation offered to the world through Christ Jesus. The Holy Spirit represents the last and highest manifestation of the saving grace of God. The Pharisees were in danger of committing the unpardonable sin by their obstinate impenitence and hardening of the heart.

Some contend that this sin cannot be committed at the present time, because eyewitnesses only of Christ's miracles had such conclusive evidence of the gracious revelation of God, as seems necessary for a wilful and final rejection of salvation. However, all sinning against better knowledge is a step in that direction, because it tends to destroy spiritual life, and the sin against the Holy Ghost is spiritual suicide (compare Heb. 10:26). It is unpardonable, not because of any lack of saving power in Christ, but

because those who commit this sin, will not repent and seek forgiveness.

Whether or not in any special case, this sin has been committed, men can not decide. However deep a sinner may have fallen, however long he may have continued impenitent, however terrible may be his despair, when at last he realizes his condition, every sinner can obtain pardon and peace with God, provided he repents. But Holy Scripture solemnly warns the sinner not to harden his heart, for fear that, eventually, repentance and a change of heart may become impossible (Hebr. 6:4-6, I John 5:16).

CHAPTER XVIII. THE PENALTY OF SIN.

1. *Why Sin is Punished.*

By penalty of sin we mean every pain or loss, direct or indirect, by which the transgressor pays for his wrongdoing, whether the suffering be the natural consequence of the sin committed or a positive infliction of punishment. That sin be punished, is demanded both by the power of God and by his holiness. Unpunished sin would present the alternative, either that God had no power to conquer sin, or that he was reconciled to the evil. Punishment of sin is not at variance with God's love. He is always the same loving God, even though to the sinner he appears as a stern judge; just as the sun always shines the same, but dark clouds may intervene or his rays, which quicken the *vital* germs and produce vigor and beauty, may scorch and destroy that which has lost its vitality. Punishment for sin is a simple asserting of the holiness of God and of his law.

The Biblical terms which are used to express divine displeasure, particularly those in the Old Testament, may appear to some inappropriate and unworthy of God, relies of a supposed narrow view of the Father in heaven. They are, doubtless borrowed from the conduct of an offended

human ruler or judge. The wrath, anger, curse, revenge of God are all anthropopathic illustrations, but they are no exaggerations. They express forcibly and graphically the fact that sin is an abomination before the holy God, something that cannot be endured or condoned (Rom. 1:18).

2. *Degrees of Punishment.*

There are different degrees or stages of punishment, even as there are different grades of sin.

a. The first experience of the divine displeasure comes to the sinner through the moral consciousness that he has lost the true relation to God. This we call the *evil conscience*, the voice within, which tells man that, by transgressing the divine law, he has rendered himself unworthy of the divine favor. Conscience speaks with authority and pronounces judgment on our acts as well as on our condition, either past or present. The effect of this testimony is a feeling of unrest, fear and remorse. The pangs of conscience may become a source of great suffering, more painful than physical affliction.

b. The next form of punishment for sin is *physical* and *social* pain or loss. The sinner, because he is separated from the fountain of life and happiness, must expect suffering, whether it comes as the natural result of a transgression of physical and social laws or as a providential appointment. Bodily weakness and disease, various affections of the mind, as well as domestic and social troubles, poverty, bereavement, grief and shame, in short all the sufferings to which man is liable are, at least indirectly, the fruit and the penalty of sin. There is individual sin and punishment, and there is race sin, with race punishment. Natural calamities which visit a community or an entire nation, such as: war, famine and epidemics, must be traced to the same cause. The Flood, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the plagues of Egypt, the Babylonish captivity and the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans are mentioned in Scripture as examples of the rule, that human

sin is punished by physical and social suffering. It must *not* be concluded, however, that sin and suffering always stand in the same proportion to each other, neither can the degree of individual guilt be measured by the degree of suffering to which a man or a community is subjected. (Luke 13:4, “those eighteen upon whom the tower of Siloam fell and killed them, think ye that they were offenders above all the men that dwell in Jerusalem? I tell you, Nay.”) Some men suffer because of the transgression of their parents, some, by special divine ordaining, for their own improvement and some for the benefit of others.

c. To the class of earthly and temporal punishments for sin, finally, belongs *bodily death* or the separation of the soul from the body. It is on account of sin, that men are doomed to die and that the body returns to the dust from which it was taken. Death is a rare punishment, which befalls the bad and the relatively good alike. Accordingly, it is generally anticipated by men with feelings of fear and anxiety. Rom. 6:23, “The wages of sin is death.”

3. *Punishment as a Means of Grace.*

All earthly punishments, be they of the moral, social or physical kind, are at the same time means of grace, that is, a discipline intended to save the sinner from future punishment. All natural evils are checks upon sin and incentives to repentance and salvation. While it has been rightly said, that the primary object of penalty is not reformatory or preventive, but vindication of the sanctity of the law, there is always an element of grace in the divine punishment. Bodily death even, the last earthly punishment, may often become a means of grace. The certain approach of death, as well as the uncertainty of the time when it may come, are strong incentives to turn from things temporal to things eternal. In many afflictions that come upon us, it is not possible to determine objectively, how far they represent punishment or how far the educational wisdom of a loving parent is manifested. (Compare the different pro-

portion of chastisement prompted by love and a simple punitive justice, in the three relations: of parent and child, master and servant, judge and criminal).

4. *Future Punishment.*

The last punishment for sin, which the Bible calls "second death" (Rev. 20:14) and "everlasting punishment," is reserved for those who are unsusceptible to the correction of earthly chastisement. When through continued impenitence the sinner renders himself unable to repent and to be saved, when, consequently, divine love finds no room any more to reveal itself, then penal justice alone comes into action which delivers the sinner to destruction. This is the future punishment, described *negatively* as a state of everlasting banishment from the presence of God, involving the complete loss of true life and happiness, and *positively* in the suffering of hell-fire or the punishment prepared for the devil and his angels. See Eschatology.

Part Third—Christ, the Saviour.

CHAPTER XIX. THE PLAN OF SALVATION.

1. *Salvation Possible.*

Fallen man, burdened with the guilt of sin and controlled by the power of sin, is utterly unable to save himself from his sinful state or to restore himself to the lost communion with God. If he is to be saved and restored, help must come from above. John 3:3, 6, "Except a man be born anew (or from above), he cannot see the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

However, there remains the *possibility* of salvation as long as the sinner still bears the image of God, though greatly defaced, and as long as he is not wholly identified with sin. If the fallen angels cannot be restored to their original state, it must be, because their apostacy was altogether a personal and final act. With fallen man the case is different. Though God cannot love the sinner in his sin, he can have compassion upon his creature oppressed by the power of sin and unable to help himself. The unchanging *love* of God, on the one hand, and the partial *ignorance* and lack of evil intention in man's fall, on the other hand—constitute the ground on which the possibility of human redemption rests. The natural discord in the sinner's heart between the attractions of sin and the demands of conscience, proves that sin is man's second nature only, not his truest essence. Man still has the capacity for being saved, because he is neither beast nor devil, but man.

2. *God's Gracious Purpose.*

Holy Scripture teaches that the salvation of mankind has been accomplished and that the redemption of the sinner

rests on an eternal purpose of God which "he purposed in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world" (Eph. 1:4 and 3:11), and accomplished in the fulness of time. This is what we call the *plan of salvation*. As the world was created by the Father through the Son of God, so provision for the redemption of the world was made through the only begotten Son. Both Peter and Paul declare that this Saviour was "foreknown indeed before the foundation of the world" (I Peter 1:20) and that the "purpose and grace of God was given us in Christ Jesus before times eternal, but manifested by the appearing of our Saviour Christ Jesus" (II Tim. 1:9). The Apostle Paul, in particular, emphasizes the sovereignty of God in granting this highest benefit to mankind, without respect to any merit or virtue of man, declaring that the salvation of the sinner is in no sense due to his own efforts but is solely the work of divine grace. Incidentally, in Rom. 9:22, the same apostle also speaks of "vessels of wrath fitted unto destruction," and Peter similarly of some who "stumble at the word, being disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed" (I Pet. 1:8).

These declarations have called forth many questions and controversies as to the extent of this divine salvation and its bearing upon the free will of man, such as: Is the redemption provided in the plan of salvation limited or is it universal? Did God predestinate some men unto salvation and others unto perdition irrespective of their personal wish or worthiness? Is there a decree of reprobation as well as an election of grace?

3. *Theories of Predestination.*

The principal theories that have been advanced with regard to the plan of salvation and its results are the following:

a. *Supralapsarianism*, the theory, that God before the foundation of the world selected from men to be created a certain number to be recipients of divine mercy and others

to be “vessels of wrath,” irrespective of the fall of Adam (“supra lapsum”) and the spiritual condition of man.

b. Sublapsarianism (Augustine, Calvin, Luther (?)). God first decreed to permit the fall and then on the strength of his foreknowledge elected from the mass of fallen men (in prospect) a certain number to be saved, while he left the rest to their fate. The Son of God came to save the elect and died for them. The others suffer the consequences of their sins.

c. Conditional Redemption. This theory holds that God, indeed, sent his son to die for all and thus provided a universal salvation. But the sinner cannot believe in the Saviour without divine help. This power to receive and to enjoy the objective redemption is given to some; the others perish because they do not believe.

d. Resistance Theory. Salvation is provided for all men as an act of free grace, which is independent of the will of man. But this grace of God may be resisted and such resistance on the part of some is the reason why they are not predestinated unto salvation. God foreknew, who would accept and who would resist.

e. Arminian Theory. Redemption is not only prepared for all men equally, but it rests altogether with man whether he will accept or reject it. Those who of their own free choice repent and believe are saved and those who do not, are lost. Men, therefore, are predestinated unto life or condemnation in so far as they predestinate themselves, by their own will and act.

4. *Arguments for and against Unconditional Predestination.*

Most of the Churches of the Reformation have included the doctrine of predestination among the articles of their Church Creed, generally choosing between the strict Calvinistic and the Resistance theory.

a. In favor of an unconditional predestination, the following arguments are urged: I. The theory is consistent in that it allows no conflicts in the divine mind. If it is

certain that some are saved, while others perish, God must have so decreed it; else he would not be sovereign in power. He wills whatever he permits. II. It is a fact that, in regard to temporal affairs, men are placed by the hand of God in the most different conditions of happiness. In the matter of our eternal destiny his will, likewise, must be decisive. III. Paul in Rom. 9:11 and 13 expressly states, that God chose Jacob and rejected Esau, before either of them could do any good or evil, "that the purpose of God according to election might stand."

b. Against an unconditional predestination note the following considerations: I. It is incompatible with the love and justice of God, which demands that all be saved who possibly can be saved. How, otherwise, would the love of God be manifested to a sinner who is predestinated to perdition? II. If God elected men for salvation by a sovereign act of volition, why was it necessary for his son to die for man? Or why should the Saviour pay the penalty of sin for the elect, with so much suffering, if they can be saved by a simple decree of absolute predestination? III. If some men cannot possibly be saved, because they are not predestined, how shall they feel any responsibility for a condition which they cannot change? How can any one feel guilty of deserving eternal punishment, simply because he is not "elect"? IV. The general testimony of Scripture is overwhelmingly against a particularistic view. We are taught that God "willeth that all men should be saved" (I Tim. 2:4) and that Christ is "the propitiation for our sins and not for ours only, but also for the whole world" (I John 2:2); that it is the sinner's fault alone, if God's purpose is not fulfilled in him (Matth. 23:37) and that, at the last judgment, the ungodly go away into the eternal fire which is prepared, not for them, but for the devil (Matth. 25:41).

5. Conclusion.

Predestination, certainly, is a mystery in regard to which official teaching should confine itself to the plain state-

ments of Scripture. For a comparison of these and for the further harmonizing of apparently contradictory declarations, the following may yet be noticed:

a. The parallel testimony of Scripture. Both in the Old and in the New Testament we find the two representations: deterministic and undeterministic, absolute and conditional predestination, closely grouped together, *e.g.*, Ex. 3:19—7:3, Isaiah 1:19, 20—6:9, 10, John 12:43—12:39, John 6:67—6:65, Acts 10:35—13:48, Rom. 2:6—8:30, Phil. 2:12—2:13, 1 John 2:28—2:19.

In the passage of Rom. 9:11 and 20, which is generally quoted as the strongest proof text for absolute predestination, the apostle makes no reference to individual salvation, but to God's dealings with nations and his purpose is to meet the claim of self-righteous Jews, that their prerogatives must be regarded. In the predestination passage of Rom. 8:29, Paul begins his declaration with the words: "Whom he foreknew, he also foreordained." This implies some willingness on the part of man to be saved as an element in the foreordaining and recognizes the moral responsibility of man as well as the divine sovereignty.

b. Predestination not limited by our conception of time. May we not profitably, in the attempt to harmonize eternal predestination with the exercise of a free will, refer to the divine transcendence of our conceptions of time. If to God all time is an eternal present, predestination before time began, means, independent of human time. Thus the operation of saving grace which, from the standpoint of eternity, is absolute, becomes conditioned by the human will, when it enters the human sphere and relation.

c. The practical aspect. Whether or not we succeed in finding a place for the human will within the divine predestination, it must be evident to a student of the Bible, that the teaching of this doctrine was not intended to furnish a fruitful topic for controversy. Wherever it is referred to in Scripture, it is done with the practical purpose of strengthening God's people and of comforting them in

the trials of life. Paul found no difficulty in teaching: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God who worketh in you both to will and to work for his good pleasure" (Phil. 2:12, 13) and Peter wrote: "Give the more diligence to make your calling and election sure" (II Pet. 1:10). Man may become certain of his being predestinated by the evidences of divine grace around him and within him. The Christian who understands his helplessness apart from God and Christ, and his absolute safety and strength, as built upon the divine election of grace, has courage, cheerfulness and power for work, knowing that he "who began the good work in them, will perfect it."

CHAPTER XX. THE TIME OF PREPARATION.

1. *Two Covenants.*

While the divine plan of salvation made the objective provision for the redemption of fallen man, the latter in turn had to be prepared for this salvation. Accordingly, the history of mankind, from the time of the fall to the coming of the Saviour, was providentially arranged to prepare the way for redemption. Fallen man was excluded from communion with God for two reasons: first, because he is defiled by sin and unable to do the will of God; and second, because he has offended against the holiness of God by his disobedience. Two things, therefore, were required, in order to restore the sinner to his lost relation, viz., satisfaction for the sins committed, resulting in absolution from guilt; and a regeneration or renewal of the sinner's heart and life.

To accomplish this twofold end was the object of God's gracious dealing with sinful humanity. And here Holy Scripture speaks of two covenants or compacts made successively for this purpose, between God and man.

a. *The Covenant of Works*, made first with mankind in general and then with Israel in particular, through the

Mosaic Law. The compact was this: Put away sin, make atonement for the past and turn to God with your whole heart, and he will be your God and you shall be his people. Men were asked to make satisfaction for past wrong doings, to abstain from evil and to do what is right before the Lord. If so, God would be gracious to them and bless them. The attempt was made to live up to this compact, by bringing sacrifices for sin, as well as thank offerings and burnt offerings to show their devotion and consecration, and by an earnest endeavor to keep the law of God. But it was found that man was unable to fulfill the requirements of this covenant. He could neither make proper satisfaction for sins committed nor live a holy life.

b. The Covenant of Grace. Moved with compassion for his fallen creatures, God offered another covenant, the covenant of grace. It stipulated that a mediator between God and man should be found, who would do and suffer whatever was necessary to bring absolution from guilt and who would regenerate the sinner by the divine Spirit. Thus, what man could not attain by his own effort, viz., forgiveness of sin and righteousness of life, would be provided and bestowed as a *free gift*. The only condition of the new covenant was *faith* in the Mediator, a faith which would be counted for righteousness, because it would reunite the sinner with his God.

The working of these two covenants is not strictly successive, but often simultaneous. While, in general, the time between Adam and Christ was the time of the old covenant of works, enough of the new covenant was anticipated to encourage men in their striving after salvation.

2. *Preparation of the Gentiles.*

Immediately after the fall, (so we are told in Gen. 3:15.) God gave the promise of a future restoration, by the "woman's seed bruising the head of the serpent." But four thousand years, or more, passed before this was accomplished, the object of the long delay being, apparently,

to allow sufficient time for man's attempt to reform his life and to atone for his sin, until it was fully proven that this endeavor to redeem himself was fruitless. At the same time the human race was given every opportunity to unfold and improve the powers and faculties of soul and body, with which it was endowed. The Lord God, like a wise Father, adapted the mental and moral training of man to the needs of the different epochs of history, the needs both of nations and individuals. He raised up among them leaders of the people, kings and priests, prophets and poets, through whom he directed their course, overruled their endeavors and led them onward in their appointed ways of development. He did, indeed, "suffer all the nations to walk in their own ways; and yet he left not himself without witness" (Acts 14:16). They became idolaters, worshipping the creature in place of the Creator, stars, plants, animals, fellow men or evil spirits. And they "received in themselves that recompense of their error which was due" (Rom. 1:27). They fell into many sins and abominable vices, and reaped the wages of their apostacy in physical suffering, disgrace, despair and death.

Yet the Gentile world, also, had its *seasons of refreshing* and of temporal and spiritual prosperity. There were times, when the mercy and goodness of God touched the hearts of men with a sense of gratitude, or when the divine judgment against evil caused them to turn away from sinful ways (compare Jonah at Nineveh). In the study of early religions, we see how large a part of the life of some nations was devoted to religious exercises, to prayer and offering of sacrifices. The Gentiles offered sin offerings, as well as thank offerings, acknowledging both the need of atonement and the obligation to consecrate their property and their time to God. Finally, they were all taught to understand and to feel, more or less clearly, the need of a new divine revelation for the salvation of the world.

3. *Preparation of Israel.*

What in the case of the Gentiles appears to be rather a groping in the dark, with the light of a few scattered stars, was a clear leading of Jehovah in the case of Abraham and his descendants. The people of Israel were not so much in advance of the Gentiles by superiority in art, culture or political achievements. Their special mission and strength lay in the sphere of *religion*, to be a witness of revealed truth, both as to human sinfulness and divine deliverance.

a. Patriarchal Period. The history of Israel began with the special call extended to the man Abram of Ur in Chaldea: "Get thee out of thy country" and the promise "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12:3). For a season, the covenant of works was set aside so far as Abraham and his family were concerned. The Lord God, overlooking the barrier of sin which separated Him from the children of men, established with Abraham and his seed the covenant of grace, in the promise of free salvation, and the faith of Abraham was "counted to him for righteousness" (Gen. 15:6).

b. Mosaic Period. But after the promise came the law. God's holy will had to be made known to the children of Israel, in rites and ordinances that were suited to their understanding. The law of Moses was a specialization of the covenant of works. It served several purposes. It *separated* the sons of Israel from the Gentiles and from their abominations and was a check against any gross outburst of sin. It brought a *knowledge* of sin and of the inability of the sinner to extricate himself from the power and guilt of sin, showing the hopelessness of man's finding salvation by the works of the law. It also served as a "tutor ("schoolmaster") to bring men to Christ" in positive *preparation* for salvation by its sacrifices, rites and symbols of atonement and purification.

c. Prophetic Period. The relation between the two covenants and the meaning of the Mosaic institutions were further explained by the prophets. These combined the

two instrumentalities for the preparation of Israel, the *promise* and the *law* in showing the gracious purpose of God both in blessings and in judgments and endeavored to lead their people to a deep conviction of sin, a true longing for deliverance and a firm trust in God's gracious promises.

4. *The Promise of Messiah.*

The hope and the promise of a future redemption, as expressed by the prophets of Israel, gradually found its center in the expectation of the coming of Messiah, the "anointed" ruler who would come to judge the heathen and to save his people. King David personally received the promise of an everlasting kingdom, for himself and his descendants (II Sam. 7:13, 16). To this promise, perhaps, the origin of the idea of the Messiah may be traced. But each of the prophets whose writings have been handed down to us in the Old Testament Canon seem to have added some prominent feature to this ideal of Israel's hope. *Jonah*, in the order of time apparently the oldest of these prophets, can be regarded as a personal type of the work to be accomplished by the Messiah, and *Joel's* prophecy refers to the expected future salvation, without as yet mentioning the author of this salvation (Joel 2:28-33). *Amos* first sees the house of David again flourish in the latter days (Amos 9:11, 14), while *Hosea* foretells the reunion of the divided kingdoms of Ephraim and Judah under a Davidish king (Hos. 3:4, 5).

Midway between the time of Moses and the coming of Christ, (about B. C. 720,) a clearer vision arises before the prophetic eye of *Micah* and *Isaiah*. In Micah 5:1-4 Bethlehem Ephrathah is mentioned as the prospective birthplace of the Messiah; in Isaiah 7:14 his birth of the virgin and the name Immanuel ("God with us"); 9:1-6, his appearance in Galilee, and 11:1-10, his divine attributes and peaceful reign. All these prophecies speak of the *glory* of the Messiah without as yet indicating any struggle or *conflict* that must precede his exaltation.

The latter is first pointed out in the *second* part of *Isaiah* (chp. 53), in the "servant of Jehovah," who goes through the dark valley of suffering and death, before he reaches the height of glory. *Jeremiah* confirms the predictions of the earlier prophets and proclaims: "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch (Zemach) and a king shall reign . . . and this is his name whereby he shall be called, the Lord our Righteousness" (Jerem. 23:5, 6). He also announces a *new covenant* as the result of Messiah's coming, namely, God's law written in the hearts of men, their sins forgiven, and "I will be their God and they shall be my people" (Jerem. 31:33). *Ezekiel* represents the bringer of salvation under the name of a good shepherd, who, as a second David, will rule his people after risking his life to save the scattered sheep of his flock. He also sees a new temple built by him and a stream of life-giving water gushing forth from beneath that temple (Ezek. 34:23 and 47:1-12).

After the Babylonish *exile*, *Daniel* speaks of a "Son of Man" as coming in the clouds of heaven, to whom an everlasting kingdom is given (7:13, 14) and the ninth chapter of *Daniel* seems to predict the time when "Messiah the Prince" shall appear (9:24-27). *Zechariah* more plainly describes the expected Saviour as one who will combine the office of king with that of high priest in his person (Zech. 6:12, 13 and 9:9). *Haggai* predicts, that the glory of the second temple shall be greater than the first, because "the desire of all nations shall come" (2:7) and *Malachi* announces a forerunner of the Messiah, a second Elijah who will herald his appearance (Mal. 4:5). *John the Baptist*, the last of the prophets and the promised herald, personally introduced Jesus of Nazareth in his twofold capacity, as the mighty Lord, "the latchet of whose shoe he was not worthy to unloose" and as "the Lamb of God which beareth the sin of the world" (John 1:27, 29).

In regard to all these and other predictions and anticipations of the future salvation, it should be understood that

there are various *kinds* of *messianic prophecies* found in the Old Testament.

a. Sometimes God made use of a certain *event* occurring in the ordinary course of history to *foreshadow* the promised deliverance, as in the sacrifice of Isaac, the pass-over and the exodus from Egypt.

b. Again, individual *men* in their personal character or official capacity *typified* some feature of the work of the coming Saviour, as Melchizedek, Joshua, David, Solomon and Jonah.

c. Frequently a prophet uttered words which primarily referred to an event happening in his own time but which found a *higher* and more perfect fulfilment in the person and mission of the Messiah, as Isaiah 7:14, Psalms 2 and 22.

d. There are, however, some verbal prophecies which seem to have an *exclusive* reference to the Messiah, even though the prophets who uttered them may not have grasped their full meaning (I Pet. 1:10, 11).

5. *The Fullness of Time.*

Salvation and the Saviour came, when according to the counsel of God the preparation of humanity for the promised redemption was completed, as Paul expresses it: "In the fullness of time" (Gal. 4:4). Both Judaism and Paganism had proved unable to save mankind without a divine interposition, and the need of a new revelation was manifest. Pilate's question: "What is truth?" in one or the other form, echoed the general sentiment of the Gentile world. On the other hand, both Jew and Gentile were ready for the coming of the Saviour. The Gospels tell us of a general expectation of the Messiah among the Jews, so that the wise men from the East could at once be directed to go to Bethlehem as the place where the Christ should be born. Jewish influence, through the Greek translation of the Old Testament (the Septuagint) and the building of synagogues in every part of the Roman empire, had spread the knowledge of the law and the promise of Israel. The

subjection of a large part of the then known world to Rome had broken down the partition walls which separated the nations and the general introduction of the Greek language was most serviceable for the diffusion of the news of salvation. A wonderful unification of the world had been accomplished, when the "decree went out from Cæsar Augustus that all the world should be enrolled" (Luke 2:1). Paul and Apollos were Jews by faith, Greeks by culture and Romans by citizenship.

CHAPTER XXI. THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

1. *Jesus the Messiah (Christ).*

The prevailing idea among the Jews was that the Messiah, or as the Greek-speaking Hebrews called him, the Christ (Christos—anoointed), would be a king like David or Solomon, who would make Jerusalem the capital of his kingdom, bring judgment upon the Gentiles and sinners, and give to his people the dominion over the earth. He would be born of the family of David, perform great miracles, introduce new religious rites, such as baptism, and he would never die (John 7:31; 1:25; 12:34). Some, but their number was not large, expected a redeemer from sin, a teacher of righteousness and a restorer of true worship (John 4:25; Luke 1:74; 2:30-32). Some, like the Jewish philosopher Philo and the Sadducees, rejected the hope of a Messiah as a popular superstition.

We know that the four Gospels were written for the purpose of proving that the confession of the early Christians was true, viz., that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ, the promised Messiah of Israel and the Saviour of the world. The fourth Gospel expressly states this to be the object of writing, "that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God" (John 20:31). The Evangelists show us how all the prominent features of the person and work of the Messiah, as foreshadowed in the Old Testament prophecies, were found in Jesus of Nazareth. His name, Jesus

(Jeshua), meant Saviour. He was born at Bethlehem of the family of David, announced by angelic voices as "the Saviour who is Christ, the Lord" and heralded by John the Baptist, as Malachi had foretold. His disciples declared him to be the one "of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write" (John 1:45), "the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matth. 16:16). He himself accepted this title and confirmed it under oath, when asked: "Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" by answering, "I am; and ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power and coming with the clouds of heaven" (Mark 15:61, 62). He proved his name and mission by the miracles which he performed, by the pure and sinless life which he lived and by the exalted and precious doctrines which he taught. He proclaimed a new law and a new revelation of God the Father, through his Son, the mediator. But "he was despised and rejected of men;...he was wounded for our transgressions and the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all;...he was brought as a Lamb to the slaughter," exactly as the prophets had foretold (Isa. 53:5-7). Therefore we believe that in Jesus of Nazareth there was also fulfilled the messianic promise, "that he shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied...because he hath poured out his soul unto death and bare the sin of many" (Isa. 53:11, 12), and that other word: "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool" (Ps. 110:1).

2. *The Son of Man.*

Jesus Christ spoke of himself frequently as "the Son of Man." While the use of that title has a special reference to the prophecy in Dan. 7:13 and to the Son of Man to whom was given dominion and an everlasting kingdom, it applies to Christ as well in its broadest meaning. He was a true man, not merely in outward form but in all things, sin only excepted (Hebr. 4:15). Peter speaks of him as a man ordained of God (Acts 2:22-24), and Paul as the man

Christ Jesus (I Tim. 2:5). He had a material body of flesh and blood which passed through the ordinary stages of human growth from infancy to manhood and manifested the ordinary human wants; sleep, hunger and thirst. He likewise had a human soul, subject to the laws of earthly development. He learned and acquired wisdom (Luke 2:52), he had a finite human intellect which was limited not only in the sphere of secular knowledge but even with regard to events in the spiritual world, such as the hour of his return (Mark 13:32). He reasoned as men do; he was joyful and sorrowful. He prayed to God as men do and he could be tempted. "He learned obedience and he was made perfect through suffering." Yet he was a unique man in his moral perfection and sinlessness and he was the "Son of Man" in the sense of being the ideal man, the universal or representative man, the second Adam.

3. *The Son of God.*

But Jesus Christ was more than man, more than the perfect man; he was also the "Son of God." In the Gospel account of the earthly ministry of Christ we find that designation frequently applied to him. Luke records the announcement of the angel to the virgin Mary: "The power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore the holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35), and at the baptism of Jesus a voice from heaven was heard saying, "Thou art my beloved son" (Luke 3:22). Mark writes: "The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God" (Mark 1:1). John says: "We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). Nathanael, when first meeting him, addresses him with, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God." Peter, in the name of the disciples, confesses: "We believe and are sure that thou art Christ, the Son of the living God," and Thomas, after becoming fully convinced of the resurrection of Jesus, calls him: "My Lord and my God" (John 1:19;

6:69; 20:28). While, undoubtedly, the term "Son of God" was used by different persons and at different times with more or less depth of meaning, and at first, probably, altogether as an official title belonging to the Messiah, it is evident that the disciples of Christ expressed by it far more than that a divine mission and work was being accomplished by their master. They believed him to be a partaker of the divine nature, as John expresses it, "the Word which was in the beginning with God, which was made flesh and dwelt among us, the only begotten Son who was in the bosom of the Father." And Christ himself not only accepted the title as belonging to him and the worship due to the Son of God, but he confirmed the claim by saying, that he was greater than Moses, Solomon and the prophets, the revealer of the Father in heaven, the Saviour and the Judge of men. He claimed to have come down from heaven, that he was before Abraham was born (John 8:58), that he had glory with the Father, before the world began (John 17:5) and that he had power to forgive sin (Matth. 9:6). Finally he made the explicit declaration: "I and my Father are one" (John 10:30). It is the Apostle John who has recorded the most striking utterances of Christ respecting his divine nature, but the Apostle Paul, also, speaks of him as "the image of the invisible God, the first born of all creation" (Col. 1:15) and declares that "in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2:9), "who was declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection of the dead" (Rom. 1:4).

4. *Christ, a Divine-Human Person.*

From the testimony of Scripture, as just given, the Christian Church has derived its doctrine of Christ as being the eternal Son of God, a unique personality in which God and man were united. Jesus of Nazareth was one person with the Son of God or the Word of God, the Logos. It was not a mere instilling of the divine Spirit into a human being, but a union of a divine and human

nature. As the Ecumenical Council, held at Chalcedon, A.D. 451, has formulated it: "Jesus Christ is truly God and truly man, of a rational soul and a body... He is one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, only-begotten, existing in two natures without mixture." As the union of spirit and body constitute man a personality, so the union of the second person in the divine Trinity with a human spirit and body constitute the personality of the "God-man." The Church has endeavored to further define the relation between the two natures in the following three propositions, which have been generally accepted as true:

a. The *divine* and *human* natures in Christ are *not mixed*, so as to produce a compound nature. The finite cannot become infinite. The Son of God was not changed into a human being, nor did the man Jesus rise to the state of divinity. Each nature retained its attributes. Christ had a finite and an infinite intelligence; a human and a divine will. The human intellect increased in wisdom and the human will learned obedience, while the divine nature ever remained infinitely perfect.

b. *Communion of attributes and acts.* On the other hand, it follows from the union of two natures in one person, that whatever can be predicated of either nature, can be affirmed of Jesus Christ, the God-man, as a personality. (*Communicatio Idiomatum.*) Thus the God-man was finite and infinite, limited in knowledge and omniscient, he was born at Bethlehem in the days of Herod and he was preëxistent before the foundation of the world. But it was the divine nature only which was preëxistent, not the human; and it was the man Jesus only who was crucified, not the God-head. So, likewise, the two natures *coöperate* in the *acts* of Christ, although some acts of his are purely human, such as eating and sleeping, and some are purely divine, such as raising himself from the dead. However, all the acts of Christ are the acts of one personality. When his human nature suffered, his Godhead added an infinite value to this suffering. Likewise the obedience which Christ learned

belongs to the human nature, yet being the obedience of a divine-human person it involves infinite value for the human race.

c. Christ, an object of worship. It follows, in the third place, from the union of the two natures, that the person of Jesus Christ as such is the proper object of religious worship. Here again, it is not his human nature as such, even though exalted above every other creature, which is the ground of worship. But the human nature having entered into a permanent union with the divine and thus become an integral part of the Son of God, the man Jesus Christ is an object of worship; compare Phil. 2:10, "that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow."

5. *Why the Saviour must be Divine-Human.*

What Scripture teaches with regard to the twofold nature of the Saviour is in many respects an inscrutable mystery to our limited understanding. Particularly the relation of the Son of God or the divine Word (Logos) to the humanity during the earthly life of Christ is a problem which no man can claim to have properly solved. Paul in Col. 2:2 calls it "the mystery of God, even Christ, in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden." Nevertheless this union of God and man is in full accord with rational Christian thinking. The justice of God requires that the human nature which had sinned must also make satisfaction for sin, and that man after turning away from God must, through this Son of Man, return to God. Therefore the Redeemer must be a man. But human nature alone could not do this. Neither could an angel, by assuming human nature, take the place of man and make atonement. But the Son of God, through whom, as the eternal Word, the world was created and in whose image man was made, he could make his abode in the man Jesus Christ in order to reunite humanity with God and infuse his own holiness into the human nature (II Cor. 5:19). Furthermore, a divine-human Saviour meets the needs of

humanity also subjectively, in that man needs a human God to whom he can address himself with full confidence, because he is of our race, knows our wants and has perfect sympathy with our weakness (Hebr. 2:17, 18; 4:15, 16).

6. *Theories at Variance with the Orthodox Creed.*

It took the Christian Church nearly four centuries to formulate the doctrine concerning the person of Christ in such a manner, that the orthodox creed was, with a few exceptions, generally accepted. The following theories of ancient and modern times are at variance with the Bible doctrine as understood by the Church:

a. Ebionitism. The Ebionites were a judaizing sect of the second century who held that Christ was the son of Joseph and Mary, distinguished from ordinary men only by a holy life and the endowment of divine gifts. They denied the divinity of Christ, the same as many Christians of to-day.

2. *Gnosticism.* The Gnostics *denied* the true *humanity* of the Saviour, claiming that Christ had no real body, but only a phantom body so that his crucifixion was but a scenic representation. They held that matter is equivalent with evil and that Christ assumed the appearance of human flesh, in order to deliver man from material existence.

3. *Apollinarianism.* Apollinaris, bishop of Laodicea, holding to a trichotomistic division in man, of body, soul and spirit, taught that the human nature of Christ consisted only of the body and the animal-soul, but that the *divine* Logos (the Son of God) supplied the *Spirit* or reason of Christ. At the council of Constantinople, A.D. 381, this was declared an error and unorthodox, because the human nature would not be complete without a human spirit and will. Compare John 6:38, "I came not to do mine own will" and 13:21, "he was troubled in the spirit."

4. *Nestorianism.* Nestorius, the patriarch of Constantinople, rightly contended that the virgin Mary should not be called the "mother of God," as many divines in his day

already began to call her, without limitation. For the divine nature could not be born. But the followers of Nestorius carried the distinction of the two natures in the God-man so far as to speak of *two personalities*, a divine person and a human person. A synod held at Ephesus, A.D. 431, condemned this error and the Nestorians removed to Persia, where they founded the Nestorian Church.

5. *Eutychianism*. The controversy with Nestorius led some of his opponents to another extreme. Eutychius, a presbyter of Constantinople, denied the coëxistence of two natures and held to a mingling of the divine and human elements in *one nature*. His followers were called Monophysites. A Council at Constantinople declared this to be a heresy and a subsequent Synod at Ephesus (A.D. 449) pronounced it orthodox. After the death of Eutychius, a new Church Council at Chalcedon (A.D. 451) reaffirmed the Church doctrine of one person and two natures, but the controversy continued long and vehement. The emperor Heraclius proposed a compromise, viz., "two natures, but one will" (Monothelites); but the sixth Ecumenical Council of Constantinople (A.D. 681), decided with overwhelming majority: "two natures and two wills, without confusion." The Maronites of Syria still hold to the teaching of Eutychius.

6. *Socinianism*. Laelius and Faustus Socinus, in the sixteenth century, taught that the Christian doctrine of the Trinity was unreasonable and that the "Son of God" could not have existed before the birth of Jesus Christ. Therefore Christ was not preëxistent, not God-man, and had no divine nature, but after his death and resurrection he was raised to divine honor. (Unitarians in America.)

7. *Swedenborgianism*. Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772), a mining superintendent and believer in spiritualism, was the founder of the so-called New Church, which interprets all Scripture spiritually or figuratively. "Every man has a material and a spiritual body. In like manner God has a spiritual essence and a bodily form, the one is

called the Father, the other the Son. The Son is the human nature in God and assumed a material form in Jesus of Nazareth; but this material form was, at the ascension, absorbed in the spiritual body of God.”(?)

CHAPTER XXII. THE STATE OF HUMILIATION.

1. *What Constitutes the State of Humiliation.*

Although the redeeming work of Christ, the Saviour, forms an unbroken whole, we may attempt to analyze it by dividing it into a number of successive stages. It has been customary to distinguish a twofold “state” in which the Lord accomplished his work, viz., the *state of humiliation* and the *state of exaltation*. The Scripture foundation for this distinction is found in Phil. 2:6-11, “Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God...emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross. Wherefore also God highly exalted him and gave unto him the name which is above every name, etc.” The dividing line between the two states cannot be strictly drawn. But in a general way the earthly life and ministry of Christ, ending with his death, is regarded as marking the limits of the state of humiliation. The state of exaltation, therefore, begins with the resurrection from the grave.

2. *Supernatural Birth.*

Holy Scripture teaches that Jesus Christ was born of a woman, but begotten of the Holy Spirit and not of a human father (Matth. 1:20, Luke 1:35). This “virgin birth” is *doubted* or denied by some Christians on these grounds: That it is mentioned only by Matthew and Luke, not by Mark and John nor in the Epistles; that the genealogy of Christ in Matthew is traced through Joseph; that it is unnecessary for the establishment of the divine nature of Christ; that it rests on a misunderstanding of Isaiah

7:14, "Behold, the virgin (almah) shall conceive;" that it was invented to explain the exalted character of the Saviour and the veneration of the Virgin Mary ("semper virgo"); and finally, that it is contrary to the laws of nature.

Consider, in *reply* to these arguments, the following:

a. The opening chapters of Matthew and Luke are integral parts of these Gospels and there is no reason for suspecting their genuineness and historical character. If Mark and John omit the account of Christ's birth, it is probably because they relate only what they themselves had a personal knowledge of. The Apostle Paul was called to be a witness of Christ's resurrection as a pillar of the Christian faith, not of his miraculous birth. John certainly appears to know of it, when he writes about "children of God," born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God," and "no man hath ascended into heaven, but he that descended out of heaven" (John 1:13 and 3:13).

b. Matthew, who traces Christ's genealogy through Joseph, according to Jewish law, expressly does not say: Joseph begat Jesus, but he was "the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born."

c. The supernatural birth of Christ, if it was not the only way in which the union of the divine and human natures in one person could be effected, is the most natural and rational way of accounting for it. The objection that it is contrary to the laws of nature counts for very little in this greatest self-revelation of God, which must be supernatural.

d. By means of the virgin birth we have in Jesus Christ a true representative man, not a limited individuality, as ordinary men are, but a universal man, a second Adam.

3. *The Mystery of the Incarnation.*

The manner in which such a union of the divine Spirit with the embryo of a human being was brought about and the relation existing between the babe of Bethlehem and the eternal Word or Logos, is to our finite understanding an

unfathomable mystery. By way of illustration, analogies have been found in a piece of iron heated through with fire, or in two concentric circles, viz., a small circle within a large one. Consider also the following suggestions:

a. As God is the absolute cause of his existence, he can certainly change his *mode* of existence for a higher purpose. *b.* If the race of man is created in the *image* of God, it does not seem to be outside of the sphere of divine operation to enter this race in closest union, in order to restore the image marred by sin. *c.* An antitype of the incarnation of the Son of God in the man Jesus is given us in the mystery of the spiritual birth or regeneration of every "*child of God.*" Here also the begetting principle is the Spirit of God and through the receptive faith of the repentant sinner the new man is born "which after God is created in righteousness" (Eph. 4:24). If the Spirit of God can enter the soul of ordinary men and make his abode there, it is not altogether strange that he should find his abode in the perfect humanity of Jesus Christ.

As to the *mode of manifestation* of the divine nature in Christ during his earthly life, three different theories have been advanced. *a.* The *first* is the *Emptying* or *Kenosis* theory (Phil. 2:7, ἐκένωσε, "emptied himself") viz., The divine Son, in the incarnation, divested himself of his divine attributes of omniscience and omnipotence, (some hold, also of his self-consciousness,) and became a human soul in a human body. As men, while asleep, relinquish the attributes of their spiritual being, so the Son of God reduced himself to the dimensions of humanity in the infant Jesus. *b.* The *second* theory is that of a *progressive Incarnation*. Divinity and humanity found a common meeting point in the personality of the God-man and the Logos united himself at the incarnation to the child Jesus, without loss of any divine attribute; but he communicated himself to the human nature only in proportion as the latter developed. So far as the human element was immature, so

far the divine nature also was not fully revealed. *c.* The *third* theory is: Full divine attributes, but *no exercise* of them. The divine nature was unaltered and from the first was fully united with the human nature. The humiliation was a giving up of the *use* or *exercise* of the divine attributes. The Son of God divested himself of his "glory" (John 17:15) and of his "riches" (II Cor. 8:6), so that the God-man continuously surrendered the exercise of the divine powers with which, in virtue of his divine nature, he was endowed.

While the last named theory is considered the orthodox view, having most to support it in the Scripture testimony, something may be said also in favor of the two others. But it seems useless to argue further about a mystery which, to limited human knowledge, is inscrutable. In the view of the God-man presented to us in the Gospels, certainly, the divine nature during most of his earthly life is latent and, apparently, only now and then present in his consciousness and manifested to his disciples.

4. *Earthly Life.*

The God-man then, as to his human nature, passed through the ordinary stages of earthly life, in its threefold development of growth in body, intelligence and spiritual capacity (Luke 2:52). We like to think of Christ as the ideal of *manly beauty* and artists of successive ages have endeavored to give expression to this idea, but none of the Evangelists have left us a picture of the countenance and stature of the Saviour, perhaps purposely avoiding what might detract from the universality of the person of the Redeemer or cause Christians to build their faith upon things visible, rather than invisible. The early Church emphasized the idea of the suffering Messiah of Isaiah 53, so as to apply to Jesus Christ literally the declaration: "He hath *no form* or comeliness and when we shall see him there is no beauty that we should desire him." But it is reasonable to think, that the face of the Son of Man reflected, at

least in some degree, the beauty, harmony and nobility of the indwelling spirit. The power of his *looks* is several times mentioned in the Gospels (Mark 3:3, 34). The man to whom mothers brought their children to have them blessed and who took them into his arms could not have had a hard face, but one that inspired confidence. The *voice* of the preacher of the sermon on the Mount that brought the response, "they were astonished," or that rebuked the spirits of the water with a "Peace be still," must have been strong and sweet. He who constantly wandered about with his disciples, who frequently fasted or spent a part of the night on a mountain in prayer, must have been robust and healthy. However, his body was subject to ordinary human limitations; it needed food and drink and sleep, it was liable to disease and pain.

Jesus Christ being one with God, must have had the fullness of divine *wisdom* and *knowledge* at his command, whenever he needed them for his work (John 14:6). But in the ordinary course of his earthly life his knowledge *increased* gradually within the limitations of environment and opportunity. He was a Hebrew among Hebrews, of circumscribed mental capacity. While we must suppose that his divine mission was with him from the dawn of moral consciousness, *that* also was the subject of growth in clearness, as the experience of life increased.

The God-man could be *tempted*, not indeed in his divine nature, but as the Son of Man. Though free from the taint of hereditary sin (IHeb. 7:26), he was brought into daily contact with sin and exposed to temptations from without. His sinlessness was not a simple necessity of nature, but a personal act of self-determination. He was "born under the law" and "he learned obedience" (Gal. 4:4, Heb. 5:8). The possibility of his yielding to the temptations was not excluded (compare Matth. 16:23, "thou art a stumbling block unto me"). Only by constantly conquering the power of evil, sin became to him a moral impossibility. As he came forth from each new temptation untouched by sin,

he became the pattern of human righteousness. What John predicates of every true believer, viz. (I John 3:9), "he cannot sin," applied then without limitation to Christ.

5. *Sufferings.*

In some respects the entire life of Christ on earth was a life of suffering. He was subject to hunger and thirst, weariness and want. For thirty years, he lived a life of obscurity, as the carpenter's son at Nazareth. Later in his ministry, he became a homeless wanderer who sometimes had not where to lay his head (Matth. 8:20). He was despised of men and persecuted. They even sought to kill him, though he "told them the truth" and "went about doing good" (John 8:40, Acts 10:38). He also suffered from the ordinary daily intercourse with sinners, who were wearying his soul (Luke 9:41). But in a narrower sense his suffering began a short time before his death. He suffered *first* the anticipation of death in the *spirit*, on Palm Sunday, when the Hosannas of the people had ceased and the Greeks' coming reminded him that the hour had come "for the Son of Man to be glorified" (John 12:23-27). He suffered, *next*, in his *soul*, in the garden of Gethsemane, when the awfulness of the approaching maltreatment, as of a criminal, and of the death of a sinner, overwhelmed him and caused him bitter anguish and agony. He suffered *finally* in the *body* before Pilate and in the torments of the crucifixion on Calvary.

If the anguish of soul manifested by our Saviour in Gethsemane and on Calvary has been a surprise to some, as compared with the cheerful fortitude of certain Christian martyrs under long continued torture, we must consider, that to the holy Christ his suffering and death was a far more revolting experience, than to ordinary men and particularly to Christian martyrs. For the cross which was laid on him and to which he was nailed embodied the sins of the world, and he tasted the bitterness of death, as the

penalty of sin, in a manner in which no other mortal ever was required to experience it.

The greatest depth of suffering must have been reached, when the Saviour uttered the cry: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" because the guilt and penalty of sin that were laid on him so completely covered his human nature as to cut him off, momentarily at least, from communion with the Holy God.

6. *Death and Descent to Hades.*

Though the redeeming work of Christ on earth was completed when he said: "It is finished," yet the state of humiliation continued, including the experience of physical death and his descent to the world of departed spirits. There have been and there are those who doubt the reality of Christ's death and who hold that he was deposited in the grave in an unconscious state and afterwards revived. Such a theory, instead of explaining the story of the resurrection, can only make it an inexplicable problem. Furthermore, the Evangelist John, in order to meet any possible doubt of this kind, expressly mentions evidences of the actuality of Christ's death, such as the piercing of his heart and the flow of blood and water from it. The burial of the lifeless body, according to current ideas, was rather honorable. Still the fact itself of the body of the holy Christ being laid away, like that of sinful men, to "return to the dust," must be regarded as a part of his humiliation.

As to the state of the human soul or spirit of Christ, while the body lay in the tomb, the (so called) Apostles Creed contains the words: "*descended into hell.*" This declaration is taken from Acts 2:27, where Peter applies to Christ the words of Psalm 16:9, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." The Hebrew has, Sheol and the Greek, Hades, words which simply designate the spirit world or the *invisible state* of the dead, conceived by common belief to be a place, where the departed spirits congregate.

Jewish theology distinguished in this spirit world between, Abraham's bosom or Paradise for the righteous, and Gehenna for the wicked; and Greek belief correspondingly divided Hades into Elysium and Tartarus.

The Church fathers, therefore, held that while Christ's body lay in the grave, his spirit abode in the realm of the *departed spirits*, the most general belief being, that he there proclaimed the good tidings of the accomplished atonement to the faithful believers of the Old Covenant who had been waiting for his coming. Origen was the first who taught, that Christ descended into Gehenna, the place of the condemned, in order to deliver the prisoners of Satan who were there detained. Gradually the Church in general inclined toward this belief, on the ground of I Peter 3:19: "he went and preached unto the spirits in prison, which aforetime were disobedient," and because of the prevailing conviction that all men after death must pass through a purgatory before they can enter heaven. To this day, the Roman Church teaches that the object of Christ's descent was to free the Old Testament believers from bondage (the "*limbus patrum*") and to lead them to heaven.

Protestant teaching is not united on this point. Luther held that the Saviour went to hell as a conqueror in triumph, to proclaim his victory over Satan and to announce liberty to the captives. Calvin said that Christ descended to the place of torment, in order himself to endure the pain of the condemned, as a part of his substitutional suffering. The Heidelberg Catechism explains "the descent to hell" as "unspeakable anguish, sorrows of death and hellish agonies" which Christ endured on the cross, while the Westminster Catechism defines it to mean nothing more than that he died and was buried.

Scripture testimony in regard to this question is very limited. The quotation in Acts 2:27, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in Hades," only expresses the confidence that Christ could not remain under the power of death. We know of but three passages which seem to have a bearing

on this point, viz., Col. 1:18, Christ is "the first born from the dead," that is from the assembly or company of dead men; Luke 23:43, the promise to the malefactor, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise;" and I Peter 3:18, 19, "Being put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the spirit, in which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison, etc." The "Paradise" must be that which was taught in Jewish theology and the most obvious meaning of the words in I Pet. 3, though referred by some to Christ as pre-existent in the days of Noah, appears to be that Christ, "made alive after the death of his body for a higher spiritual existence, proclaimed the Gospel of salvation in the world of spirits to the contemporaries of Noah," as well as to Moses and Elijah. This, however, would not exclude the idea of the dying Saviour having entered the state of rest which men enjoy, when the sufferings of this life are ended. Compare Rev. 14:13, "They rest from their labors."

Thus considered, Christ's descent into "Hell" or the world of departed spirits, has a threefold significance: 1. It is an additional proof of his real humanity which extended also to the state after death. 2. It testifies of the far reaching effect of his redemptive work, as availing both for the quick and the dead. 3. It shows that "in none other is there salvation, neither is there any other name under heaven wherein we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

While, therefore, in some respect, the descent to Hades marks the beginning of Christ's exaltation, yet his sharing the lot of humanity by entering the world of departed spirits, forms the turning point from humiliation to exaltation.

CHAPTER XXIII. THE STATE OF EXALTATION.

1. *The Resurrection of Christ.*

During the earthly life and ministry of Christ a veil was drawn over his glory, though even then the "grace and truth" in him shone through that veil (John 1:14). The

sublime doctrines which he proclaimed, the perfect life which he lived, the wonderful miracles which he performed, the voices from heaven which accompanied his birth, baptism and transfiguration, were anticipations of his glory. Properly speaking, however, the state of exaltation begins with the resurrection.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is declared by the Apostle Paul and all the disciples of Christ to be the *fundamental fact* of the Gospel proclamation. It was so regarded by Christ himself, being the divine attestation and seal of his redemptive work. All his claims and promises rest on this fact. Without the resurrection, the Gospel would be a myth and redemption a failure, as Paul writes in I Cor. 15:14, "If Christ hath not been raised, then is our preaching vain, your faith also is vain."

When we read in Acts 2:24, that "God raised up" Jesus and in John 10:18 Christ himself declared, "I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again," we conclude that the Godman raised up his human nature by his divine nature being one with God. But neither the apostles nor we are so much concerned about the manner of his resurrection or the nature of his resurrection body, as about the fact itself, that "Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more" (Rom. 6:9), "I was dead and behold, I am alive for evermore" (Rev. 1:18). The opponents to Christian belief have always taken special pains to attack this pillar of Christianity. We read in Acts 4:2 that the Sadducees were grieved or "troubled, because the disciples proclaimed in Jesus the resurrection from the dead" and the champions of modern unbelief triumphantly declare, that Christianity, as taught and believed in by Paul and the other apostles, has fallen with the myth of Christ's resurrection. We, however, hold this to be a primary article of the Christian faith.

a. The *possibility* of a resurrection from the dead is conceded with the belief in a personal God. He who created heaven and earth, must certainly be able to restore a body

to life, and nature presents countless illustrations and exemplifications of this possibility, in every sprouting blade of grass and every butterfly that comes out in the spring time.

b. The Biblical account expressly states that the disciples, having despaired of the cause of Christ, when he expired on the cross, did not, at first, believe the story of his resurrection. But becoming fully assured by at least ten successive appearances of Jesus, that he was alive and bodily present with them, they made this fact the leading message of their proclamation and many of them sealed their testimony with their own blood.

c. The external results. The wonderful success which has accompanied the preaching of this truth testifies to its objective reality. What else could have overcome the terrible persecutions which assailed the Church during the first centuries? What else brought to the foot of the cross peoples and rulers of all realms and races, but a living, risen Christ? What else gives to the Christian Church her undying vitality and missionary inspiration, but the firm assurance, that Christ is her living head?

d. The spiritual effect. It may be urged that certain superstitions which have held sway for a long time have also produced wonderful achievements of external success; but no conscious falsehood could have regenerated the morality of the world, like the preaching of the resurrection of Christ has done. It has proved in every way beneficial and salutary, elevating, cheering and strengthening the Christian believer.

2. *The Forty Days.*

After his resurrection Christ, apparently, remained in this earthly realm for forty days. At least, his disciples saw and met him now and then, either singly or gathered together. The object of these manifestations was *threefold*:
a. The disciples were given full and convincing evidence of the master's being alive and bodily present. *b.* He wanted

to teach them certain truths which they could not grasp before his death, yet were to learn personally from their Lord, such as the fulfillment of messianic prophecies. *c.* They were gradually to be weaned away from the physical to the spiritual, from the visible to the invisible presence of the Saviour.

He appeared to them in the body which had been nailed to the cross, in so far that it showed the prints of the nails which had pierced his hands and feet and the open wound in his side. Yet his body was *changed*. Mary Magdalene did not recognize the Lord, until he called her by name, and the two disciples on the way to Emmaus walked and talked with him a long time before their eyes were opened. The risen Christ entered a room, the doors of which were locked or bolted, and he vanished before their eyes in a mysterious manner. The resurrection body retained the properties of material existence to the extent of partaking of food and drink, but its flesh and blood were changed into a higher form of bodily manifestation.

As the risen Christ spent but a small portion of the forty days with his disciples and yet did not ascend to heaven, it has been surmised, that the activity referred to in I Peter 3:19, namely, the proclaiming of salvation to the Spirit world, belongs to this period as well as, or more than, to the time before his resurrection. There is, however, no positive Scripture evidence for this theory, which must remain a simple supposition.

3. *The Ascension.*

The third stage in the exaltation of Christ was his ascension. As he had foretold in John 6:62 and 14:2, 3 that he would go to heaven whence he had come, so in the presence of many disciples he was taken from the earth and being lifted up, visibly, he vanished in a cloud. The story of the ascension, as given in the Bible, makes it appear that there was a local transfer of Christ's body from this earth to some other region or realm, called heaven, as Christ himself

had told his disciples: "In my father's house are many mansions; I go to prepare a place for you." Though we cannot tell, what stars or worlds in particular may be the center of the material heavens, it is quite conceivable that there is a place, where the Creator manifests his glory, in this visible universe, in a special manner.

So much we know, that the ascension was Christ's final entrance into his invisible glory. It was a fitting conclusion of the work of redemption that his human nature was received into the glory of heaven. For this sinful earth is no fit abode for the glorified Redeemer until it is regenerated. Furthermore, Christ went to the Father to make intercession for his brethren, on the strength of his atoning work, as he had promised (John 14:3, 13) and, finally, he went to send the Holy Spirit, whose invisible working was better suited to complete the work of salvation, than the visible presence of the God-man (John 16:7).

4. *Sitting at the Right Hand of God.*

In these words, the Apostles' Creed expresses the *fourth* stage of Christ's exaltation, as declared by the Evangelist in Mark 16:19, and elsewhere and in accordance with the promise given in Psalm 110:1: "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." This is evidently a *figure* borrowed from the palace and throne of an earthly monarch. It denotes the high dignity bestowed upon the Saviour after his ascension. We cannot conceive of the divine nature of the God-man as having an increase of dignity, but his *human* nature after the ascension shared in the divine glory. See Ephes. 1:20-22 and Phil. 2:9-11. All *power* in heaven and on earth is now given to Jesus Christ, the God-man, because he is the Saviour of man, and this honor and glory constantly increase in proportion as the promise is being fulfilled "that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the father" (Phil. 2:10, 11).

A disputed point in connection with this "Sitting at the Right Hand" is, whether the God-man, since his ascension, can be said to be *bodily* present with the believer on earth or only through the divine Spirit? This question is of importance mainly for the understanding of the mode of the presence of Christ in the Sacrament. The parting declaration of the Saviour, before his ascension, was: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Are we to understand this to mean, that the glorified body shares the divine attribute of *omnipresence*, that it is ubiquitous? The idea of a human body would seem to imply the attribute of limitation to a definite form and space. Hence locality appears inseparable from our conception of a body and we must think of the body of Christ as confined to a definite place "in heaven." But as the human and the divine nature in the God-man are inseparably united, we may, nevertheless, believe that the divine-human Saviour as such is everywhere personally present with his people. The manner in which this is done, we cannot attempt to explain.

CHAPTER XXIV. THE PROPHETIC OFFICE OF CHRIST.

1. *The Three Offices.*

As, in considering the *person* of Christ, we speak of him as passing through the two states of humiliation and exaltation, so the mediatorial *work* of Christ may be most clearly set forth under the title of three "*offices*" (Lat. *officia*) or functions, viz., a *prophetic*, a *priestly* and a *kingly* office. We are told that Jewish theology, even before the birth of Christ, taught that the Messiah would wear a threefold crown, viz., the crown of the law, the crown of the priesthood and the crown of the kingdom. While these terms and titles, when applied to the Saviour, must be understood to be figurative, (as well as those of physician, shepherd, lamb, etc.,) there is good Scripture authority for using them. In Deut. 18:15 Israel is given the promise: "Jehova thy God will raise up unto thee a *Prophet* from the midst of thy

brethren, like unto me (Moses) ; unto him shall ye harken." In Psalm 110:4 we read: "Thou art a *Priest*. forever, after the order of Melchizedek," and Jeremiah 23:5 proclaims: "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a *King* shall reign and prosper and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth" (compare Zechar. 9:9). These three titles given to Christ correspond to a threefold need of the human race. Being ignorant, guilty and helpless in consequence of the fall, the sinful world needs a prophet, to teach the way of salvation, a priest, to atone for its sins and a king, to uplift and to direct his people.

2. *Christ, the Greatest Prophet.*

A prophet is one who speaks in the name and by the commission of God, one who is inspired to teach the truth and to make known the will of God. Jesus Christ himself declared that he came into the world to "bear witness of the truth." He was recognized as a prophet by Jews and Samaritans. (Luke 7:16, "A great prophet is arisen among us" and John 5:19, "Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet.") In his ministry he combined the principal functions of the prophetic office, by teaching, miracle working and foretelling future events. Before the covenant of grace between God and man could be established, it was necessary to teach and to reveal the truth concerning the plan of salvation and to point out the way for obtaining this salvation, by the preaching of: "Repent and believe for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Jesus Christ was *greater* than all other prophets. *a.* He was better *qualified* for the office in that he was not hindered by human sin and error. *b.* In virtue of the union of the divine nature with the human in Christ, the revelation of God through him was direct and *personal*. Instead of the "Thus saith Jehovah" of the Old Testament prophets, he could say: "The words that I speak unto you, I speak not from myself, but the Father abiding in me doeth the

works'' (John 14:10). *c.* He was not merely a witness for the truth, but he was the truth *incarnate*, because in him, the Eternal Word, the perfect revelation of God to the world was made manifest. His whole life not less than his words are a revelation of God. "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father" (John 14:9). Therefore, also, all other prophets point to him, but the revelation given through him is not to be superseded by a more perfect one.

3. *Principal Teachings.*

Among the great truths which Christ in his prophetic office has taught are the following:

a. The Sinfulness of Man. In spite of all endeavors to keep the law of God and to live righteously, the natural man is evil (Matth. 7:11) and carnal (John 3:6), hence excluded from the kingdom of God, until his sin is removed and the sinner is regenerated. The beginning of salvation is the conviction and confession of sin and the recognition of the need of salvation. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matth. 5:3).

b. The Plan of Salvation. Christ revealed the love of God, as manifested to the world in the decree of salvation. The Father in heaven has sent his son into the world to save it. A new covenant, the covenant of grace, is offered to all who will accept it. The kingdom of heaven is brought near to men by the Son of Man, who is also the Son of God and the mediator of salvation (John 3:16).

c. Repentance and Faith. The one inevitable condition for obtaining salvation is, that all men must repent of their sins and believe on him whom the Father has sent. For he is appointed to be the Saviour of all those who put their trust in him. But he will also be the judge of those who reject him (John 6:29, 40).

d. Sanctification. This offer of free salvation, however, does not change the requirement of holiness. The righteousness of the heirs of the kingdom must exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees. The New Testament demand is:

“Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect” (Matth. 5:48). But the power of sanctification also is the gift of God, freely bestowed upon those who through faith become united with Christ, the Redeemer, and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, whom Christ doth send (John 17:19 and 14:17).

The prophetic activity of Christ is continued by the enlightening influence of the Holy Spirit and the preaching of his apostles and ministers (John 16:12, 13).

CHAPTER XXV. THE PRIESTLY OFFICE OF CHRIST.

1. *Christ, the True Priest.*

As the prophetic activity of the Saviour is especially connected with his public ministry on earth, so his priestly function is naturally associated with his *death*. A priest in Old Testament times was a man who represented his fellow-men before God, just as the prophet represents God before his fellow-men. The duties of the priest, accordingly, were threefold: *a.* To offer sacrifice for the people; *b.* To intercede for them with prayer and supplication; *c.* To give absolution for sin and to bless the people. Sinful man needs a mediator to present his person and his offering to God, in such a manner as to make them acceptable.

But the priests and the sacrifices of the Old Testament were not priests and sacrifices in the proper sense. Jesus Christ alone possessed all the qualifications required for this office. No other priest had the right of access to God, no sacrifice but his could really atone for sin, and no one but he, in truth, could bring the blessing of God to his people. Hence even the high priests of Israel, as shown in the epistle to the Hebrews, were but imperfect types of the true priesthood of Christ. They exemplified how sin *should* be atoned for, while Christ actually removed sin by the sacrifice which he offered for the sins of the world, himself the Lamb of God (Hebr. 10:10).

2. *His Atonement.*

That Christ suffered and died for sin, to make atonement, that is to make man and God "at one" and reconciled, is a truth explicitly taught in many passages of Holy Scripture. While the word "atonement" itself does not occur in the New Testament, and in the Old Testament, where it is used, stands for a "covering" of sin, all the New Testament writers agree in their testimony, that the Saviour died on account of human sinfulness and to save sinners. See I Cor. 15:3, "Christ died for our sins;" I Peter 2:24, "His own self bare our sins in his body on the tree;" I John 2:2, "He is the propitiation for our sins;" Hebr. 9:12, "Through his own blood, he entered in once for all into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption."

This truth, however, is denied or doubted by many professing Christians of our day, who assert: *a.* Christ suffered and died only to leave us an example of patience and hope; or *b.* To confirm the truthfulness of his teaching and seal his testimony, as a martyr for the truth; or *c.* To constrain the sinner by his great love to be reconciled to God. But the death of Christ was not only a martyrdom. If it were intended to be mainly an example of patience and faith, other martyrs who died with triumphant joy would have excelled Jesus Christ in this respect. If it were merely to attest the truth of his doctrine, it could, at best, prove only his personal sincerity and conviction, not the objective truth of his testimony. If he died to constrain the sinner to be reconciled to God, such reconciliation could not take place without the sinner's being first delivered from the curse and the power of sin, which hold men captive.

3. *Various Aspects of the Atonement.*

Turning to the Scripture testimony concerning the true significance of the atonement, we may classify the leading declarations under *four* heads:

a. The *moral* or *ethical* aspect. The atonement is a manifestation of God's love, in which he reconciled the world

unto himself, and by an act of free grace, for the sake of his dear Son, pardons the sinner and cleanses him from all guilt. See John 3:16, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life. Rom. 5:8, II Cor. 5:15.

b. The commercial aspect. The atonement is a ransom which was paid by Christ to redeem the sinner, and his death is the price of our deliverance from the slavery of sin and death. Matth. 20:28, "The Son of Man came to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." I Tim. 2:6.

c. The legal aspect. The atonement is further described as a fulfillment of the requirements of justice. The holiness of the law was vindicated and satisfaction was made for sin, by Christ's bearing the penalty of sin, in order to acquit the guilty. II Cor. 5:21, "Him who knew no sin he made to be sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in him." Rom. 5:19.

d. The sacrificial aspect. The atonement was a work of priestly mediation, a sin-offering presented in behalf of sinful humanity. Christ, the high priest and the Lamb of God, died as the substitute of man. John 1:29: "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." Col. 1:20, Hebr. 9:11, 12.

4. *Redemption.*

Among these various methods of representing the meritorious work of Christ, the Christian Church, for a long time, gave special preference to the commercial aspect. The death of Christ is called in the New Testament *λυτρον* (lytron), a ransom (Loesegeld), indicating deliverance from captivity or slavery, by paying the *price* for the one held in bondage. Some of the Church fathers, therefore, beginning with Origen (+254), held, that through the fall, *Satan* became the rightful owner of sinful humanity, as he is styled the "prince of this world" (John 12:31). God in

his justice, respecting the rights even of Satan, offered his son as a ransom for captive humanity and the transfer was made in the Saviour's death. But as the sinless and divine Christ could not be held by Satan, the latter was deceived in the transaction (John 14:30, "the prince of the world cometh, and he hath nothing in me"). Others regarded the suffering and death of Christ rather as a battle with the devil, in which he conquered Satan and "taking his armor, divided his spoils" (Luke 11:22), by delivering captive man from his bondage.

The scripture foundation for this conception of redeeming or rescuing the sinner from the ownership of Satan is rather uncertain. While we are taught that the devil has permission to inflict the penalty of sin upon the sinner, it is nowhere stated that he has any claim in justice to hold sinful man in bondage. Accordingly, Athanasius already (+373), and after him especially Anselm of Canterbury (+1109), in his treatise: "*Cur Deus Homo?*" dismissed the idea of redeeming man from the power of the devil and substituted for it that of a *debt* paid to God. The debt was sin and Christ paid the debt, by voluntarily submitting to the death of the cross. The ransom paid by Christ thus becomes the same as the making of satisfaction, by becoming man's substitute.

5. *Substitution.*

It has been said that, for the right understanding of the Scriptural doctrine of the atonement, we must *combine* the fourfold aspect of the mediatorial work of Christ, viz., the moral, commercial, legal and sacrificial, to get the proper view of it. The most prominent feature, however, and the one most clearly presented is that Christ's suffering and death were *vicarious*, that the atonement was accomplished through substitution. From ancient times, Jew and Gentile had brought sacrifices for sin. The victim was put in the place of the sinner, as an offering "for his soul" (Lev. 17:11). By laying his hands upon the animal's head and

confessing his sins, the sinner endeavored to transfer his guilt upon his substitute. This type, according to Scripture testimony, was fulfilled, when Jesus Christ, the Saviour, became our substitute and as the Lamb of God, bore the guilt of sin in our stead, not by compulsion but willingly, out of love (Isai. 53:6, John 10:17, 18, Rom. 5:8).

God himself has provided an atonement which was in harmony both with his *love* and with his *holiness*, reconciling the world unto himself, by Christ satisfying the demands of divine justice and rendering it consistent with his holiness to have the sinner acquitted. Christ Jesus, the God-man, after living a life of sinless perfection, in place of man and as a man, yet permitted himself to be identified with man's sin in Gethsemane and on Golgotha, and bore what the sinner should have born, viz., God's holy displeasure against sin. The *sinless life* which he lived as a man and the *suffering* which he endured in man's stead, through the union of the divine with the human nature in him, became of such infinite value that the holy and righteous God could accept the sacrifice as an equivalent for what mankind in general should have done and suffered. Thus the guilt of the human race was canceled, when Christ cried: "It is finished."

6. *Objections Considered.*

Two principal objections have been raised against this doctrine of substitution and vicarious suffering.

a. It is *inconsistent* with *reason*, because sin is a personal act of transgression which cannot be atoned for by Christ's taking the place of the sinner. And, it lowers the standard of human obligation, if instead of working out our own salvation, we depend upon the merits of another. But human sin differs from devilish sin in this very feature, that it is not altogether a personal act of *conscious intention*. It is a disease rather than a crime, involuntary slavery rather than rebellion. Sin committed with deliberate purpose, "with a high hand" (or presumptuously,

Numb. 15:30) could not be atoned for with sacrifice even under the Jewish law. But human sin is not an absolutely deliberate act of malice. The sinner is not fully identified with his sin. If he could submit to the penalty for sin and, while suffering, cling to God in full trust, until he is purified from evil, the atonement would be accomplished.

But no sinful man is able to undergo this process of cleansing and live, much less could he pay the penalty for a fellow man. Christ, the God-man and the representative man, the second Adam and head of the race, could live and die in man's place, do and suffer whatever was required, because he stands in central relation to all souls of men. The other objection, viz., "that it lowers the standard of human obligation," rests simply on a misunderstanding of the plan of salvation. No man can "work out his own salvation," unless "God worketh in him to will and to do;" but Christ's atonement secures pardon only for those who acknowledge their sinfulness and whose faith in the Saviour contains the germ of holy living.

b. Another objection is raised on the ground that the sufferings of Christ were *temporal* and finite, whereas the punishment which threatens the sinner is *eternal*. How can the redeeming work of the Saviour which was limited to a brief time, avail for sins that have been committed for thousands of years? Scripture answers, because "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not reckoning unto them their trespasses" (II Cor. 5:19). The vicarious suffering of the man Jesus is of *infinite value*, not because he endured every form of punishment which might be due to each sinner, paying as it were eye for eye and tooth for tooth, but because the perfect life and the perfect love of the holy Son of Man were accepted of God as an equivalent for the guilt of humanity. It was not merely the outward act, but chiefly the spirit and purpose, the holy will and the infinite dignity of the sufferer, which constituted his suffering a full equivalent in the eyes of infinite justice.

7. *Is the Atonement Limited?*

There are two theories of a limitation of the atonement, which deserve consideration and which may be briefly termed the *Romanist* and the *Calvinist* limitation.

a. At one time in the history of the Christian Church, it was believed that the redemption of Christ availed only for the sins committed *before* baptism and that for sins committed after receiving this rite the sinner himself must make satisfaction. This theory having been rejected by Church councils as a heresy, many Catholic divines held, that the atonement avails indeed for the remission of eternal punishment for all sins, but that the sinner will suffer the *temporal* punishment for his sin, not only on earth, but also hereafter, unless he makes satisfaction for his sin. (Hence the doctrine of “indulgences.”) But how can a sinner make satisfaction for his sins, either now or hereafter, if whatever he may offer is again stained with sin? The Bible teaches, that “the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin” (I John 1:7), that he “has obtained an eternal redemption,” and “by one offering hath perfected forever them that are sanctified” (Hebr. 9:12 and 10:14), so that nothing remains to be added.

b. The other limitation of the meritorious work of Christ is the belief that he died for the *elect only*, for those who are predestined to eternal life. But we have clear and ample Scripture testimony to show, that Christ died for *all* men without exception. To quote but a few passages, we read in I John 2:2, “He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world;” I Tim. 2:4 and 6, “God, our Saviour, who willeth that all men should be saved...and He gave himself a ransom for all;” Hebr. 2:9, “that by the grace of God he should taste death for every man.” In Rom. 5:12-19 the apostle makes this the basis of his argument, that, as sin came by one man upon all, so righteousness and forgiveness of sin has come by one for all men.

The few passages which seem to limit the benefit of the atonement, must, therefore, be explained in harmony with these declarations. Thus the declaration in Matth. 20:28, "The son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister and to give his life a ransom for *many*" does not contrast the "many" with "all," but with "*few*." The same applies to the statement, that "he laid down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). So far as God and Christ are concerned, salvation is unlimited. The whole world, as seen in Christ, is redeemed; objective provision is made for all. Those who by their unbelief reject this salvation, exclude themselves from the human world which Christ came to redeem.

8. *Highpriestly Intercession.*

The highpriestly work of Christ continues after his ascension to heaven. The New Testament makes repeated mention of the activity of the exalted Saviour, who intercedes for his own before the Father (Rom. 8:34, Hebr. 7:25, I John 2:1). This intercession in heaven does not detract from the sufficiency of Christ's work on earth. It is not a pleading by which the Father is moved to compassion, but the continued *presentation* of the sacrifice once brought for sin and, at the same time, a constant mediation of divine grace to the redeemed (John 1:16). Objects of this intercession are those who believe in Christ, not the world as such. The world is entreated to accept salvation, while those who, through Christ, have become children of God are ever presented to the Father, by the "only begotten son." Thus Christ's intercession is a daily application of the sacrifice once offered to the daily needs of the redeemed.

CHAPTER XXVI. THE KINGLY OFFICE OF CHRIST.

1. *Christ a King.*

Israel's Messiah and the Saviour of the world was predicted in the Old Testament to come as a king (Isai. 9:7), and proclaimed in the New Testament to be such, from the

time of his birth (Luke 1:32, Matth. 2:2). Even in the hour of his greatest humiliation on earth, when standing before Pilate, Christ called himself a king, who had come to establish his kingdom. But he is a king in more than one sense. In his *divine* nature the God-man was a king from *eternity*, seeing that he is the sovereign ruler of the world, which was created of God by Him, who is the eternal Word. However, when Christ's kingship is spoken of in the New Testament, it is generally not this dignity which belongs to him in virtue of his being the Son of God, but the mediatorial kingdom that belongs to Christ in virtue of his *human* nature being exalted to divine honor and glory.

2. *The Mediatorial Kingdom.*

By the term Mediatorial Kingdom, therefore, we understand that dominion which is the reward of the God-man for accomplishing the work of salvation. With regard to the world at large it is a *kingdom of power*, with regard to the present establishment of the Church it is a kingdom of *grace* and with regard to the future, it will be a kingdom of *glory*. He was a king, while on earth, but rather a king by right, than by actual rule. His coronation took place at his ascension, as he told the disciples, saying: "All authority hath been given unto me, in heaven and on earth" (Matth. 28:18). God has put into the hands of the God-man the administration of his providence. In Hebr. 2:8 we read: "In that he subjected all things unto him, he left nothing that is not subject to him." Accordingly, during the present Christian dispensation, Christ is our king, the *Lord over all*, the supreme ruler, to whom the whole earth must yield obedience. Earthly monarchs and governments possess authority only as they derive it from him, and he uses all the institutions of mankind for the advancement of his kingdom.

3. *The Kingdom of Grace.*

In a narrower sense, Christ exercises his kingly office in and over the Church, the kingdom of grace (Ephes.

1:22, 23). For the *Church* is the temporary, crystalized form of the kingdom of God. Christ founded it; he rules in it by his Spirit, he defends it, he perfects it by cleansing it and by giving it the victory over every foe. The relation which he holds towards the Church in general, as head and king, he also holds towards each part of the Church in particular and to each member of the Church. In other words, Christ is the only true Lord, having absolute authority and control of the Church, king, bishop, or elder of his people. He has the right to direct both the spiritual life and the temporal concerns of every branch of the Church universal as well as of every member therein.

This kingdom of grace, though established on earth and with earthly forms of organization, is unlike the kingdoms of this world. It can and does exist under all forms of civil government, without any interfering with them. Its primary object is to exercise dominion over the souls rather than over the bodies of men, and although it aims at a complete change of the world of man, including its social and political aspect, this change is to be brought about, not by revolution, but by regeneration.

4. *The Kingdom of Glory.*

The third phase of Christ's kingdom is still future. It is that for which in particular we pray: "Thy kingdom come!" The progress of this kingdom also is in a large measure dependent upon the prayer and the exertion of Christian men and women, until "in the name of Jesus every knee shall bow. . . and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:9, 10). Then will begin the kingdom of glory, when Christ will return to the earth and gather his own into that kingdom which has been "prepared for them from the foundation of the world" (Matth. 25:34).

This kingdom is of *eternal duration*, as we read in Rev. 12:15, "The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever

and ever.” The declaration of the Apostle Paul in I Cor. 15:24 that, when the last enemy, death, is destroyed, “Christ shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father,” clearly is not intended to deny this truth. It refers to the mediatorial kingdom in its specific purpose of bringing salvation to a sinful world. When the plan of salvation has been fully accomplished, there will be no further need of a *mediator* and of a mediatorial kingdom. The triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, will reign and govern, as he did before sin came into the world.

Part Fourth—Personal Salvation.

CHAPTER XXVII. THE BEGINNING OF PERSONAL SALVATION.

1. *Salvation a Gift of God.*

The objective salvation prepared for humanity in Christ, the Saviour, becomes a personal possession of man, when he accepts it with the conditions under which God has placed it. God will have all men saved and on his part, whatever is needful for godliness and happiness, has been provided. But the sinner must be saved in the manner ordained of God and here the first principle is this, that “all glory of man is excluded” (Rom. 3:27). It is only the grace of God which works any spiritual good in man. He who quickens all natural life is also the sole creator of spiritual life. Man cannot purchase salvation at the price of repentance and faith. It is simply a gift of God, who, through the Holy Spirit, bestows upon sinful man all that is needed. It is the work of the Spirit of God to enlighten, to justify and to sanctify. Only by the operation of the Spirit, can Christ for us become Christ in us. Our personal salvation, even from the first desire to be saved, is a divine work, as Paul writes in Ephes. 2:8, 9, “By grace have ye been saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, that no man should glory.”

2. *Salvation not without Man.*

Divine grace, however, does not annul conscious self-determination on the part of man. It does not work by magic, but in accordance with the rational and moral nature of man. It remains ineffectual, unless it meets with the response of human willingness. The Christian, that is every one who makes a personal experience of salvation, may be said to be a *likeness of Christ* himself. As in him a

divine and a human nature were united in one personality, so in the regeneration of the sinner the divine and the human agencies must work together. As Christ was conceived of the Holy Spirit, but born of the Virgin Mary, so each "child of God" must be begotten of the divine spirit, but born in a human soul. (Compare John 1:12, 13.) As the relation between the two natures in Christ is a mystery to our limited understanding, so is likewise the exact relation between the divine or creative and the human or receptive principle, in the salvation of man.

The analogy of *physical* birth, as illustrating the work of personal salvation, was pointed out by Christ himself in John 3:3, and all the New Testament writers make use of it (Tit. 3:5, I Pet. 1:3, James 1:18, I John 3:9). As in the natural sphere, so in the spiritual, there are *successive stages* of growth. *a.* Life begins first in an embryonic state, when by the operation of the Spirit the call to salvation is extended and accepted. *b.* The child of God is then born, through repentance and faith. *c.* He grows up to spiritual manhood, by a gradual increase of life and activity.

3. *Individual Preparation.*

The actual beginning of personal salvation is to be found in the various means employed of God for preparing the sinner to receive the call to salvation. Christ himself testified, that no man can come to him, "except the Father draw him" (John 6:44). Whenever, therefore, a sinner is brought nigh to salvation, it is in consequence of such a divine drawing, independent of his own will or act. This is sometimes called "prevenient grace." Its form and manner differ, according as a man is either born and brought up in the care of the Church or without the Church. For it is not immaterial, whether a child grows up in a Christian community and is being "nurtured in the chastening and admonition of the Lord" (Ephes. 6:4), or whether it is surrounded by the opposite influences up to

the time, when a personal experience of saving grace is made.

a. Preparation outside of the Church. This class includes, besides the heathen, Mohammedans and other non-Christians, the millions of nominal Christians who, though born in a Christian country and perhaps baptized, grow up without the blessings of Christian precept and example. Such men often receive a *special* preparation for salvation by manifestations of divine help or of divine chastisement, which attract their attention. Certain experiences which they make, whether they be of a joyful or painful nature, awaken in them a longing for something better and higher than the natural life affords. Or they are furnished an opportunity to hear and read a testimony to the truth, by coming into contact with Christian men and women who can instruct them.

In some cases the *general* revelation of God, through nature, history and the inner voice of conscience, is employed to give men the preparation for the salvation to be offered to them. In other cases a direct testimony of revealed religion through a word of Scripture or a Christian hymn which they hear, serves the purpose of making an impression or awakening an interest in spiritual matters.

b. Preparation within the Church. The case is different with those who receive a Christian training. Where the church and the family attend to their respective duties, preparatory divine grace finds more material to work with. Children of Christian parents who are instructed in the Bible, who attend divine worship and who are taught to pray, are comparable to the children of Israel, as distinguished from the Gentiles. They know the divine will and his gracious promises; they believe in the Saviour in a general way, but do not as yet make a personal experience of religion, because they do not realize their sinfulness and have no personal interest in salvation.

CHAPTER XXVIII. THE CALL TO SALVATION.

1. *The Gospel Call.*

The transition from preparatory grace to actual, saving grace is made by the divine call which invites the sinner to come and share in the benefits of the salvation provided by Christ. God calls men, first, by the preaching of the Gospel, as Paul writes in II Tim. 1:9: "He called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus," and Col. 1:6: "Whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the Gospel, which is come unto you, even as it is also in all the world."

This general Gospel call includes three things, viz.: *a.* Christian *instruction*, or a presentation of the plan of salvation. *b.* A *promise* of God to save all who are willing to be saved. *c.* An urgent *invitation* and admonition to accept this offer.

The Gospel call is addressed to all who hear or read the word of God. It is not confined to any age, nationality or class of men. It is Christ's invitation: "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matth. 11:28). It is the call of the "Spirit and the bride" (the Church): "Come; he that is athirst let him come; he that will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev. 22:17). It is the mission call, as it is written: "How shall they believe in him whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?... So belief cometh of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ" (Rom. 10:14, 17). Christ has promised that, before the close of this world-period, the Gospel shall have reached every tribe of men. As for those who died before the word of salvation in Christ could be proclaimed on earth, we may conclude from I Pet. 3:19 and 4:6, that this may have been done for them in the Spirit-world, and the same hope may be entertained with regard to the heathen who are now dying without having heard the Gospel.

2. *The Inward Call.*

The external call, through the preaching of the Gospel, is accompanied or followed by an inward call of the Holy Spirit addressed to the heart of the sinner. The Gospel call alone would not suffice to awaken sinful man from his sleep and to conquer the natural aversion of the heart to spiritual things. The Spirit of God must first reprove and "convict the heart of sin, of righteousness and of judgment" (John 16:8), in order to effect a spiritual awakening. But this inward call of the Spirit is not always heeded. Some of those who hear the Gospel call seem averse to it from the beginning; others remain indifferent, from first to last; while still others, who apparently began to listen and were awakened, sink back into the sleep of sin and harden their hearts, so that the call becomes of none effect.

What is the cause of this fact? Some have assumed, that there is a difference between what they term a *serious* and a not serious call. The former conquers the natural indifference or enmity of the human heart, so as to compel the sinner to yield to the divine influence; the latter produces no permanent results. But the thought, that God's call to some men should not be altogether a serious or sincere call, is utterly at variance with the testimony of Scripture and the nature of God. The inward call to salvation, if it is to be of value to the sinner, must involve the furnishing of all that is required to accept the offer, so that its rejection is an act of man's free will.

3. *The Effectual Call.*

It must be admitted, however, that from the experimental point of view, the distinction between an *effectual* and an *ineffectual* call is well founded. Not only is there ample evidence that the divine call does not produce the desired awakening in the hearts of all men, but even the same person who for a long time has not heeded the call to repentance and faith, often does so at last. This shows that there is a difference between what has been termed a

general and a *special* or personal call. It appears that the special call is addressed to the individual, whenever he or she is properly prepared either to accept or reject the offer of salvation, in such a manner as thereby to decide their destiny. If some are called in childhood, or at the third hour of life, others at the sixth hour, and still others not until the eleventh, in old age (as pointed out by our Saviour in the parable of the laborers, Matth. chp. 20), the cause of the delay may be altogether the natural perverseness of the human heart which will not yield to the Spirit's pleading. But it may be due also to the educational wisdom of God, who delays the decisive call until the right time has come.

The *manner* in which this personal and special call comes, varies greatly with different men. Some can testify that they were drawn by the Lord "with bands of love," as the prophet said of Israel: "When Israel was a child, then I loved him and called my son out of Egypt" (Hosea 11:1), or as the boy Samuel at Shiloh who hardly yet recognized the divine voice, while he listened. Such men can scarcely tell afterwards, when and how they became spiritually awakened. Others, on the contrary, like the jailor of Philippi, are struck with terror and cry out trembling: "What must I do to be saved?" (Acts 16:30). (Note the contrast with Lydia "whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul," Acts 16:14.)

4. *Relation between Preparation and the Call to Salvation.*

In the case of men born in a Christian community, the sacrament of baptism and the Christian training which they receive may be said to constitute the general call to salvation. To make this general call a special and effectual one, the only requirement is a personal *realization* of their *need* of a Saviour, because of the natural perverseness of their heart and the inability to love God and to keep his commandments. Such knowledge of sin and the consequent effectual call may come very early in life. In a majority

of cases, however, the needful conviction of sin seems to come only with a longer experience of life.

The *relation* between the awakening call and preparatory grace is not necessarily one of a succession in time, but rather of logical sequence. With Christian children, at least, the work of preparation to a large extent follows after the general call to salvation has been given. Furthermore, the special call often is not limited to one short moment, but extends over a longer period. Time and manner in this, as in every stage of personal salvation, cannot be fully defined or circumscribed. But all who find salvation in Christ Jesus, are first called by the Gospel, through the Holy Ghost. Every effort to lead sinners to repentance and faith proves unavailing, until this awakening call has been heard and heeded.

CHAPTER XXIX. REPENTANCE.

1. *The Need of Repentance.*

After considering the means by which the Lord prepares and invites the sinner to accept salvation, we turn to the effects produced thereby and the *human conditions* required for the actual obtaining of this personal salvation. John the Baptist, and Christ himself, commenced their preaching with the demand: "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matth. 3:2 and 4:17). "Repent" (*μετανοείτε*) means "change your mind" or turn about, be converted. The natural position of sinful man is away from Christ and his salvation, either indifferent and careless or self-righteous. Accordingly, the first demand made upon the natural man is that he acknowledge his need of a Saviour, and turning away from self and sin to Christ, receive from him forgiveness and the regeneration of heart and life, without which it is impossible to enter the kingdom of God.

This turning away from sin to Christ is what we term "Conversion." It has a negative and a positive aspect. The

former, that is the turning from sin, is called *repentance*, the latter, that is the turning to Christ and putting our trust solely in the Redeemer, is called *faith*. True repentance must lead to faith; the two are inseparable, simply two phases of the same act.

2. *False Conceptions of Repentance.*

The word “repentance” is liable to misconceptions. To the minds of many people it conveys the idea of a human accomplishment by which man is bringing about his salvation. The Roman Catholic Church has a whole system of so called “*penances*” imposed upon the sinner, who desires to make himself a worthy object of divine grace. She has made repentance a “sacrament of penance” requiring three acts, viz., contrition, confession, and satisfaction. Many Protestant Christians also entertain views which are not in accord with Scripture teaching. Some understand by repentance, good resolutions of moral improvement and spiritual reform, or a public profession of religion, followed by a joining of the Church. Others think, that repentance means the intellectual acceptance of the doctrine of universal depravity and a confession of sinfulness. Still others define it as an experience of great grief and anguish of soul over the sins committed. While these and other manifestations are in order, as expressions of a repentant mind, we must pronounce it an error to regard good resolutions, excited feelings and public confession of sin, the true essence of repentance, or to measure its genuineness by them.

3. *Elements of True Repentance.*

Evangelical doctrine, as moulded by Scripture teaching, defines repentance to mean such a turning of the mind and disposition, as will bring with it a deep *conviction of sin*, coupled with an earnest *longing for salvation*. The elements of such true repentance are set forth in the three first beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount (Matth. 5:2-4), to be the following: *a.* “Blessed are the poor in spirit: for

theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” This is, first of all, a matter of *intellectual* conviction, a recognition of sin as meaning both guilt and helplessness (Ps. 51:3). *b.* “Blessed are they that mourn.” The conviction of sin is accompanied by an *emotional* element, a deep sorrow for sin, not merely for the consequences of sin, but for sin itself (Ps. 51:1). *c.* “Blessed are the meek.” The mourning of the soul for sin leads to meekness, that is *willingness* to surrender self-will and self-righteousness, and to accept the offer of salvation in the manner in which it is presented. Thus in true repentance, successively, the intellect, feeling and will are affected and prepared to receive the gift of divine grace.

4. *The Author of Repentance.*

As there cannot be anything truly good in man which does not proceed from God, it follows that true repentance is a work wrought in man by the *Spirit of God*. Unless He enables the sinner to repent and to turn from the error of his way, there can be no acceptable repentance. But man must make use of the power which God gives. Holy Scripture recognizes the voluntary activity of the human soul in this change, as distinctly as the divine origin. Otherwise repentance could not be urged upon man as a duty; compare Acts 3:19, “Repent and be converted (or turn again), that your sins may be blotted out.” In this respect, repentance differs from preparatory grace and the call to salvation, which are purely divine acts. Repentance is divine-human, the first stage of the new relation between God and man.

5. *The Motive to Repentance.*

But what is the agency employed by the Spirit of God to produce repentance? Does it come by the *Law* or by the *Gospel*? Christian experience has proved, that for the realization of guilt which is necessary for true repentance, the commandments of the Law must first convict us of sin, as Paul writes in Rom. 3:20, “Through the law cometh the

knowledge of sin.” However, the effect of a purely negative testimony can be but negative, a feeling of fear or remorse, which eventually must lead to despair or else to a hardening of the heart. “For the law worketh wrath” (Rom. 4:15).

The *Gospel* of love has a better effect. The deepest conviction of the guilt of sin and the most earnest longing to be free from the bondage of sin are awakened by a contemplation of the love of God manifested in Christ Jesus, and him crucified. The Saviour suffering for our sin is the most powerful incentive to repentance (Acts 2:36, 37). In the accursed death of the holy Christ we read most clearly God’s holy wrath against all sin, and our own guilt. This is the testimony of successful missionary labor, from Paul’s preaching in Corinth and Ch. Henry Rauch’s story of the crucified Saviour among the Mohican Indians at Shekomeko (in 1740), to the present day. Nevertheless, most men do not at once understand the significance of the death of Christ and remain indifferent toward the Gospel of love, unless it is mingled with, or preceded by the stern demands of the law.

As in the general preparation of humanity the law served as a “school master” to lead to Christ, so with individual men the law’s demand must first break the natural indifference of the human heart. We conclude, therefore, that the law is a necessary factor in preparing the sinner for repentance, but the Gospel of the crucified Saviour completes this preparation. Repentance comes *not without* the law, but *by* the Gospel.

CHAPTER XXX. FAITH.

1. *The Need of Faith.*

The need of faith in God and in his promise, in order to receive a share in the divine offer of salvation, is frequently set forth in the Bible. The exalted position of the patriarch Abraham, the “father of all believers,” is declared to be

due to the strong faith which he manifested. Psalmist and Prophet unite in the testimony, that without faith it is impossible to please God. Compare Psalm 78:22, "Anger came up against Israel, because they believed not in God and trusted not in his salvation;" Isaiah 7:9, "If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established;" and Hab. 2:4, "But the just shall live by his faith."

In the *New Testament* proclamation of salvation, the call to repentance is closely linked with the exhortation to believe in him whom God has sent to be the Saviour of men. In Christ's own teaching, faith in himself and in his Gospel was declared to be the special work which God required of man (John 6:29), and the apostles, with one accord, make this faith the unalterable condition of personal salvation. Rom. 1:16: "The Gospel (of Christ) is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth;" I John 5:10, etc.

Faith and repentance belong together, as parts of the same act, the act of conversion, and repentance toward God involves faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 20:21).

2. *The Elements of Faith.*

Faith, like religion in general, has a subjective and an objective aspect. As a subjective energy, it is not limited to one or the other mental faculty of man, but involves the exercise of all of them. It is *a.* An *intellectual belief* in the doctrine of man's sinfulness and dependence upon Christ. *b.* An *interest* in the person or thing in which we believe, viz., the grace of Jesus Christ, our Saviour. *c.* A *trust* in the object of our faith and a consequent *surrender* of the heart to Christ and a reception of his pardon and spiritual life. Thus faith concerns the understanding, the sentiment and the will. If James in his epistle speaks of a faith which the devils also have and tremble, apparently limiting the idea of faith to the understanding, he merely refers to a misunderstanding of Christian teaching, common enough in his day, as also in ours. Saving faith certainly involves a

firm trust and an interest of the *heart*, as the center of man's personality.

The only definition of faith given in the New Testament, viz., Heb. 11:1, "Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the proving of things not seen," shows that it means a laying hold of something which cannot be obtained by sensuous perception or logical reasoning. It is a moral act which includes the willingness to accept the Saviour and the salvation which is offered in him. We are saved by his grace, but faith is the hand which receives the grace of God. Faith has no merit in itself. It is valuable not for what it gives, but for what it gets.

3. *The Object of Faith.*

In Heb. 11:1 the general scope of faith is declared to be "the proving of things not seen," viz., the creation of the world by the word of God, his government and his *entire revelation* of himself. The whole truth of God then, so far as it is made known to mankind, forms the *general* object of religious faith. Under this head may be comprised all the worship of God which devout men have rendered in ancient and modern times, even outside of the sphere of revealed religion. Socrates, Plato and Sophocles had faith in God, though the scope of their faith was limited to God's natural revelation of his truth and grace. Abraham and the children of Israel had a faith which was counted to them for righteousness, though the plan of salvation was not yet made fully known to them. All such faith was implicitly a faith in Christ and would become a conscious trust in the Saviour, when made known to them, in this or in the future world, as Christ said, in Matth. 8:11, "Many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven."

The *New Testament* faith differs from this general faith in having for its *specific* object Christ and his salvation. The *person* and *work* of Jesus Christ, as the embodiment of the revelation of divine love and mercy, constitute the one

great object of Christian faith. John 20:31, "These are written that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his name." Accordingly Christian faith is a trust *a*. In the *work* of Christ, his life, suffering, death and resurrection as the ground of salvation. *b*. In the *person* of Christ, as the God-man, the mediator of salvation, our exalted Lord, Master and Friend.

4. *The Author of Faith.*

As to the origin of saving faith, the same holds good that was said of repentance, viz., that it is a gift of God that must be appropriated by man to be acceptable and efficient. The more decisive this act is in determining the destiny of man, the more certainly such saving faith must be of divine origin, must be God's work in us. On the other hand, however, this faith can be pleasing to God only if freely appropriated by the human heart and by the exercise of a free human will. It is the expression of personal confidence in the revelation of the redeeming love of God in Jesus Christ, our Saviour. God gives the power to believe, but man is free to take or to refuse this power (John 6:29).

CHAPTER XXXI. REGENERATION AND JUSTIFICATION.

1. *The Change of Heart.*

Repentance and faith combined in what we call "conversion" produce a change in the sinner's condition and relation to God, which is represented by the two terms regeneration and justification. While repentance and faith are partly divine and partly human acts, this change of the heart is exclusively *a divine work*. It is the divine aspect of that operation which viewed from the human side is termed conversion; it is God turning the soul to Himself. This fact is brought out clearly by the term *regeneration*. For men cannot beget themselves, nor are we ever in Holy Scripture exhorted to do so, while we are urged to repent and believe. But this change of heart and of the relation

between the human heart and God, again presents a two-fold aspect, as expressed by the two words: Regeneration and justification, the one marking the ethical, the other the judicial side of the same act. We find that the Apostle John emphasizes more the ethical or creative aspect, using frequently the terms “born again” and “cleansed from sin,” or “fellowship with Christ,” whereas Paul lays stress on the judicial phase. The terms most often occurring in his letters are “justification, forgiveness and righteousness.”

2. *Regeneration.*

When the sinner by repentance and faith has been brought to that state of willingness which accepts the offer of divine grace unconditionally, the Holy Spirit by an act of divine power exerts such an influence upon the soul of man as to virtually make him a new creature. This is accomplished through a personal and organic union with Christ, the Redeemer, by which Christ enters into the soul and the believer shares in the merits of Christ’s life, death and resurrection. The *figure* of a *birth* is employed in order to indicate the absolute newness of the relation and condition of the regenerate, and the principle of the new life-power that is communicated by fellowship with Christ. Regeneration is not a physical change, but the giving of a new direction or *tendency* to the faculties and powers of man. The believer’s life is no longer self-centered and sin is no longer the governing principle. The sinner is transformed into a *child* of God. The old sinful self gives place to a new self which has its center and life in God. Compare John 1:12, 13: “As many as received him, to them gave he the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God;” and I Peter 1:3: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy begat us again unto a living hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.”

3. *Justification.*

The doctrine of justification is set forth briefly by the Apostle Paul in Rom. 3:22-26, in these words: "Now a righteousness of God hath been manifested through faith in Jesus Christ unto all them that believe; . . . being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God set forth to be a propitiation through faith, by his blood, . . . that he might himself be just and the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus." As thus defined, justification is a *judicial act* by which God on account of Christ, to whom the sinner is united by faith, declares that sinner free from guilt and *acquitted*. God acquits the ungodly who believe in Christ, and declares them just on the ground of what Christ has done for them. It is because the sinner in childlike trust has cast himself upon the grace of God and Christ, that God can see him as being one with Christ, and *in* Christ, and for Christ's sake forgives his sin, as Paul writes to the Ephesians: "In whom we have our redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph. 1:7). This justification and forgiveness of sin carries with it reconciliation and peace with God, a free access to the throne of grace and the assurance of our having become children of God and heirs of salvation. Compare Rom. 5:1, 2, "Being therefore justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; through whom also we have had our access by faith into this grace wherein we stand."

4. *Justification before Sanctification.*

The doctrine that justification is simultaneous with regeneration ought to be guarded against the error of the Roman Church, that the sinner must first become righteous, before he can be declared righteous and that to this end he must *coöperate* in bringing about his justification, by changing his heart, as the Canons of Trent declare: "Justification consists in the sanctification and renewal of the

inner man by the voluntary reception of God's grace and gifts." The great obstacle to man's being restored to communion with God is unforgiven sin. That sin must first be removed, before the grace of God can take possession of the heart. But how can the sinner be declared righteous, when he is not? How can he be justified, before he is sanctified? Simply through the imputation of the merit of Christ. By faith the sinner becomes so *identified* with the *Saviour*, that he shares in his righteousness; he is ideally righteous, because his faith is counted for righteousness (Rom. 4:9).

5. *Union with Christ.*

The immediate result as well as the inherent cause of regeneration and justification is, that the sinner is restored to that communion with God which belonged to the original state of man, as a state of grace. It is the Apostle John, in particular, who emphasizes this truth, that the believer has *fellowship* with God in Christ; *e.g.*, John 1:3, "Our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ." But the Apostle Paul often expresses the same thought in saying: We are *in* Christ and Christ is *in* us. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:1). "It is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. 2:20). The relation between Christ and the believer is represented under the figures of head and body, husband and wife, vine and branches, the Saviour himself having made use of the last named comparison in John 15:5, "I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit, for apart from me ye can do nothing."

This union with Christ, according to Scripture teaching, is virtually a fellowship with the *Father*, the *Son* and the *Holy Spirit*. The Spirit represents the indwelling of the Godhead in particular (Rom. 8:9, "if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you"), and the Father the primary cause of the divine self-communication (John 14:23, "If a man love me, he will keep my word and my Father will love

him and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him'''). Christ the Saviour is living in his disciples through the Holy Spirit and at the same time interceding for them with the Father. He, the God-man, the only mediator between God and man, must ever remain the *personal center* of our relationship to God.

6. *The State of Grace.*

This truth is of practical importance also for the right understanding of what is *essential* in the condition of those who have personally experienced salvation, and are in the state of grace, as contrasted with the state of the unregenerate. In many instances, the external manifestations of conversion are not very perceptible. Judging by these only, it may sometimes appear doubtful, whether a work of grace has begun. Some can point to the day and the minute, when they were regenerated, others cannot do that. The change takes place without any striking signs. A Christian child whose heart is open to the influence of the Holy Spirit from the earliest infancy, possesses that poverty of spirit, to which Christ adjudges the kingdom of heaven, and which is the essential part of true repentance, even though it may lack the deeper understanding of the corruption of sin and the grief over it. Such a child, furthermore, may have the substance of saving faith, a simple trust in Christ, our Saviour, without the clearness which belongs to the full-grown faith. Accordingly such a child can and does make an experience of saving grace and of the change of heart, receives the forgiveness of sin and the gift of the Holy Spirit, yet without consciously passing through the regular stages of conversion, as before described, and as experienced by those who grow up in indifference or unbelief.

The majority of Christ's own disciples may have been lead in this Johannean way, as it has been termed, in distinction from the Pauline way of conversion, in which each stage is distinctly marked by a special experience. If the apostolic writings contain fewer instances of this kind (see,

however, II Tim. 1:5 and 3:15), the reason is apparent, viz., that in those days there was as yet no generation of Christian children, trained by their parents and by the Church in the “nurture and admonition of the Lord” (Eph. 6:4). The latest New Testament writings, the epistles and the gospel of John, bear ample testimony to the fact that it is not the manner or *method* of conversion which is essential, but the *result*, viz., a personal appropriation of salvation which proves its genuineness by a living communion with Christ, the Saviour, and by the fruits of grace and peace which grow from it. I John 5:12, “He that hath the Son hath the life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not the life.”

CHAPTER XXXII. SANCTIFICATION AND CONFLICTS.

1. *The New Life.*

The Christian believer, who has been justified by grace, through faith in Christ, and regenerated by the power of the Holy Ghost, lives a new life, the life of sanctification. The man who, through his union with Christ receives forgiveness of sin and peace with God, is thereby also delivered from the power of sin. He is set apart for God and righteousness, cleansed from sin and consecrated to his Lord and Saviour. As a child of God, in principle, he is *sanctified*. Compare I Cor. 1:2, “Unto the Church of God, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints.” But sanctification differs from regeneration as growth does from birth. It is the continuation of the work begun in regeneration, the continuous operation of the Holy Spirit in the believer, effecting a gradual renewal and reformation of the whole life of man and of all his faculties. The believer is a new creature in Christ Jesus, in whom all things have become new, his disposition, his motives and his hopes. Instead of living only for earth and time, he lives for heaven and eternity, as Paul says in Gal. 2:20, “The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the

faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

2. *Conflicts.*

This new life of sanctification, however, is not a course of unimpeded progress toward the goal of perfection. There remain tendencies to evil within the believer and temptations without which must be overcome. In fact, there are now two natures bound up in one and the same person, which the apostle terms the old and the new man (Eph. 4:22-24) or the flesh and the spirit (Gal. 5:17), and which are utterly opposed to each other. Christian sanctification is not a simple process of spontaneous evolution, but an active contest, a *warfare* against the *sinful nature* within and the power of evil without. The exhortation is addressed to them: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who worketh in you both to will and to work for his good pleasure" (Phil. 2:12, 13). The three last petitions of the Lord's prayer make reference to this conflict: "forgive us our trespasses, lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." James in his epistle addressing "beloved brethren," writes: "Wherefore putting away all filthiness and overflowing of wickedness receive with meekness the implanted word. Be ye doers of the word and not hearers only, deluding your own selves" (James 1:21, 22) and even the Apostle John, in spite of the idealistic standpoint which he occupies, speaks of a conflict as unavoidable in the life of the believer, when he says: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves...if we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:8, 9).

But most of all does Paul deal with this conflict between the *flesh* and *spirit*, the *old* and the *new man*, saying, "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary the one to the other, that ye may not do the things that ye would" (Gal. 5:17); and "But now put ye also away all these: anger, wrath, malice,

railing, shameful speaking out of your mouth; lie not one to another; seeing that ye have put off the old man with his doings, and have put on the new man, which is being renewed unto knowledge after the image of him that created him" (Col. 3:8-10). These terms indicate that the struggle is not merely against the weakness of flesh and blood which must be overcome, but against deep-rooted *besetting sins* that still remain in the hearts and lives of the regenerate. He admonishes his "son in the faith" Timothy, to flee these things and to "fight the good fight of the faith." He, furthermore, exhorts the Ephesians to put on the whole armor of God, that they "may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities,...against the spiritual hosts of wickedness" (Eph. 6:12).

It is for this cause, that righteousness and peace, though they are a present possession of the children of God, are frequently spoken of in the Epistles, as things of the future and that the believer looks forward with longing desire to the time, when the conflict shall be ended and the victory gained.

3. *Progress in Sanctification.*

This testimony of the Scriptures is fully corroborated by the experience of believers, in all ages of the Church. They tell us of hard conflicts with sin in their Christian life and of their ardent longing for the final victory. They feel that they still have need of daily forgiveness for daily sins and that as long as they live here on earth they remain imperfect. But this confession does not conflict with an earnest *striving* after *holiness*. In spite of many temporary defeats, the life of the child of God is essentially a victorious warfare. There is no real duality of nature in the regenerate, demanding equal recognition. The new nature of the Christian believer alone has a right to exist, while the old sinful nature is, by right, crucified with Christ and dead. In this sense, the Apostle John can write: "Whoso-

ever is begotten of God doeth no sin, because his seed abideth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is begotten of God" (I John 3:9), although he has testified before, in the same epistle: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves." The child of God as such cannot commit sin, cannot wilfully and intentionally *live in sin*. The sins of the sanctified are not truly personal sins to which the heart has given assent. The regenerate nature alone is recognized as rightfully dominant in the believer's life.

4. *Times of Weakness.*

However, there occur in the life of every believer, times of special weakness, when his spiritual nature appears to be paralyzed, when he is conscious of the sinfulness of certain thoughts, words or actions, yet powerless to resist the temptation. From the practical point of view, at such times, the regenerate differs little from the unconverted man. His condition is even more dangerous, because of his experience of divine grace which increases his responsibility. But such a state, as it is abnormal, is generally of short duration. To determine by rule, what sins a child of God may be liable to fall into, at such a period of *spiritual disease*, is impossible. The New Testament records a "dissimulation" of Peter, after the day of Pentecost (Gal. 2:13), unfaithfulness on the part of Mark (Acts 15:38), selfishness among the companions of Paul (Phil. 2:21), gross immorality of a member of the Corinthian Church (I Cor. 5:1), and a biting and devouring one another among the Galatian Christians (Gal. 5:15). What are usually termed gross sins, are not always the most dangerous. But the common characteristic of sins thus committed by the regenerate is that they spring from spiritual weakness and from a partial ignorance, rather than from wilful self-abandonment.

This weakness and ignorance must be healed by penitent faith and a new measure of divine grace and light, so that the final outcome of such "*backsliding*," as the prophet

Jeremiah has called it, may be an actual progress in Christian life and experience. For it will bring a deeper insight into the danger of being careless and the need of greater watchfulness, together with a fuller realization of the hatefulness of sin and our absolute dependence upon the grace of God. The more the spiritual nature in the believer grows in strength, the more the remaining evil will be confined to the external parts of man's being, without affecting the center of his life. Sin will appear more and more as a *burden*, a suffering which the believer has to bear, not as something that he is in sympathy with or desires. The ideal to be attained is to become like Christ who bore the sin of the world in his body, though it was not his own sin.

5. *Stages of Spiritual Growth.*

The spiritual life of the believer presents a variety of phases and stages of development. Some Christians progress further and with more rapid strides on the road of sanctification than others. Not all have the same capacity for spiritual growth and not all make the same use of their opportunities. The general course, however, is the same in all believers. St. Paul marks two successive stages, which he terms: *babes* (*νήπιοι*) and *perfect*, carnal and spiritual, the *weak* and the *strong*. St. John distinguishes *three classes*, viz., *children*, *young men* and *fathers* in Christ (I John 2:12-14). The "babes" of Paul and the "children" of John, possess what every child of God must have, viz., a saving trust in the Redeemer and a beginning of spiritual life, but they lack as yet, what the "young men" or the "strong," have gained, spiritual power to conquer their besetting sins, and the temptations of the world and Satan. The "fathers," or the "perfect," add to these possessions a clearer apprehension of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus and a more unreserved consecration (Coloss. 1:9). They can say with the apostle: "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." "Christ is all, and in all" (Col. 3:11) has become their guiding principle and rule of life.

Another way of designating two successive stages of spiritual life and experience, is to distinguish between the mere *general possessing* of the Holy Spirit and the being *filled* or "the Infilling" with the Spirit (Acts 13:52). Conditions for making this second experience are: Emptiness of self and sin; a complete surrender and acceptance of all that God has offered to his children in Christ. The blessings gained thereby are defined as: Spiritual power, victory over sin, Christ and the Bible made more real to the believer, and joy and assurance which were not experienced before.

6. *The Question of Sinless Perfection.*

It is the desire and the duty of the children of God to follow after the "sanctification (A. V. holiness) without which no man shall see the Lord, looking carefully lest there be any man that falleth short of the grace of God" (Heb. 12:14, 15). It is their aim to become perfect, even as their heavenly Father is perfect (Matth. 5:48). But is complete sanctification ever attained in the present life? In the great revival of personal religion in Germany and England, during the eighteenth century, the Moravian Brethren were in full accord with John Wesley about the necessity and privilege of the Christian's being wholly consecrated to God and becoming Christlike in act, word and thought. Yet it was this very point on which Moravians and Methodists could not agree, the former declaring it as their conviction, that no Christian while here on earth, ever can attain perfection and that those most advanced in Christian graces must confess themselves still to be "poor sinners."

Those who believe in sinless perfection, support their belief by these arguments: *a.* The *command* addressed to Christians to be perfect, implies the possibility to attain perfection. *b.* The *promises* and declarations of Scripture, such as I Thess. 5:23, "The God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire, without blame;" I John 2:5, "Whoso keepeth

his word, in him verily hath the love of God been perfected. Hereby know we that we are in him;" and 3:6, "Whosoever abideth in him, sinneth not; whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither knoweth him." *c.* The *consciousness* of not having committed any sin voluntarily for some time, as Paul writes in I Thess. 2:10, "Ye are witnesses and God also, how holily and righteously and unblamably we behaved ourselves toward you that believe."

In reply to this claim the following must be said: *a.* While we may not deny the abstract possibility of attaining perfection, the *actual imperfections* of the supposedly perfect Christians are clearly manifest. There is no man, woman or child living, who does not sin. *b.* The overwhelming testimony of *Scripture* confirms this fact, *e.g.*, James 3:2, "For in many things we all stumble;" I John 1:8, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves;" Phil. 3:12, "Not that I have already obtained or am already made perfect: but I press on if so be that I may apprehend that for which also I was apprehended by Christ Jesus." *c.* The *most mature* Christians and the holiest men and women who ever lived, have freely confessed their *imperfection*. The very seal of relative perfection attained by the fathers and mothers in Christ has always been an humble acknowledgment of their lack of perfection.

CHAPTER XXXIII. GOOD WORKS.

1. *Necessity of Good Works.*

The genuineness of saving faith and of the change of heart is attested by good works, which are the fruits of spiritual life. Accordingly the demand for good works is as imperative in New Testament times, as it was for the Old Testament believer, with this understanding, however, that no man is saved by his good works, as such, and that no man can claim any *merit* because of these good works. The grace of God alone saves to the uttermost, not our good deeds, for "It is the gift of God, not of works, that no man should glory" (Eph. 2:9). Evangelical doctrine is opposed

to that teaching of the Roman Church which distinguishes between common duties, that are incumbent upon every Christian, and between good works, which give a special claim on the favor of the Lord and which may be utilized for supplementing the deficiencies of other men. Hence the doctrine that the good works of the Saints constitute a treasure at the disposal of the Church, which has led to a churchly traffic in "indulgences." Over against this manifest error, the Protestant Churches rightly emphasize the truth that our best works are *stained with sin* and imperfection, and that what is truly good in us is a gift of divine grace and does not entitle us to a special reward. When we have done all the things that are commanded, we are still "unprofitable servants," at best, who "have done that which it was our duty to do" (Luke 17:10). But it is also true, as James writes, that "faith without works is barren" (dead) James 2:20, and Christ himself said: "Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

2. What are Good Works?

Good works are the practical manifestations of sanctification in various lines of Christian activity. In the sermon on the Mount the duties of the disciples of Christ, in this respect, are summed up concretely under the three heads of *almsgiving*, *fasting* and *prayer*, that is duties toward our fellowmen, toward ourselves and toward God, or consecration of our property, of our body and of our soul to the service of the Lord. Our Saviour, besides emphasizing the need of the true motive and spirit of such works, warns against measuring their value by outward appearance and by quantity, rather than quality. The ordinary daily duties call for a faithful performance, as much as the extraordinary occasions, and there is room for good works in the common routine of apparently insignificant labors and conditions of domestic and business life. Properly speaking, there is for the Christian believer but *one* good work to

perform, viz., to know and to do the will of his Lord. But this general duty presents a *positive* and a *negative* aspect, according as it means, on the one hand, an increase in spiritual strength and activity and, on the other hand, a mortifying of the old sinful nature of man.

As the Old Testament law required of every Israelite *obedience* to the will of God, exemplified in the ten commandments, so the New Testament enjoins upon the disciples of Christ the duty of keeping the *commandments* of *Christ*. The Saviour himself made this the condition of discipleship (John 14:15). It is not the slavish obedience of a servant that is enjoined, but the cheerful obedience of a good child or of a friend, who will do all he can to please a parent or a friend. See John 15:14, "Ye are my friends, if ye do the things which I command you," and Gal. 4:7, "Thou art no longer a bond-servant, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God." Therefore James calls it "the law of liberty" (James 1:25), because it requires nothing but an obedience inspired by love and gratitude. As Christ himself proved his love to the Father by doing his will and accomplishing his work (John 4:34), so the children of God and the followers of Christ desire nothing better than to show a loving submission to the will of God, in all that they are and do. Such sincere consecration of heart and hand, naturally, includes almsgiving, temperance, piety and any service of God and man, that may be required by circumstances.

But this service of God is an act of cheerful willingness only so far as the new spiritual nature of the Christian is concerned. The old sinful nature rebels against it and this sinful tendency must be *mortified*, if the good work which is pleasing to God shall be accomplished, as Christ has said: "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Luke 9:23). For although this mortifying of the sinful nature, in principle, has taken place already in the act of regeneration, it needs to be confirmed by daily repetition. The chief war-

fare here is directed against our besetting sins (Heb. 12:1, "the sin which doth so easily beset us"), deeprooted habits and tendencies, which again and again threaten to gain the mastery over the new man. The more enlightened the believer's conscience becomes by the light of the Holy Spirit, the more clearly will the spiritual eye detect also the smaller stains and defects which in the beginning of sanctification were scarcely noticed, and the struggle against these seemingly lesser sins is not on that account less painful.

The most mature Christians realize most vividly the necessity of "resisting unto blood, striving against sin" (Heb. 12:4), because they learn not to spare the dearest idols of their sinful nature and to surrender even apparently innocent enjoyments, whenever the Lord demands such sacrifice. What the child in Christ is willing to do, what the young man in Christ has bravely begun, that still remains a daily task for the father in Christ to accomplish, even to the end of his earthly life.

3. *Christian Virtues.*

We speak of Christian virtues and graces which the believer must strive to acquire and the apostolic writings refer to them extensively and frequently. They are but an amplification of the one requirement of doing the work of God by a loving obedience to his will. Accordingly they also, naturally, divide themselves into *positive* and *negative forms*. As the ten commandments of the Old Testament law represent so many phases of the required obedience to the will of God, so we may distinguish *ten virtues*, grouped in pairs, which comprehend the New Testament fulfilment of the law of Christ with regard to God and our fellow-men, in both its positive and negative aspect. To the *former* would belong such graces as 1. Godliness and truthfulness. 2. Gentleness and kindness. 3. Brotherly love and sympathy. 4. Honesty and industry. 5. Beneficence and liberality; to the *latter*: 6. Watchfulness and soberness. 7. Temperance and purity. 8. Humility and

meekness. 9. Contentment and cheerfulness. 10. Patience and hope.

Rightly combined, these virtues represent the consecration of the human faculties and energies in every line of work, including thought, word and deed, to the Lord and to his service, as Paul writes, in *summing up* the Christian ideal, in Phil. 4:8, "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue and if there be any praise, think on these things."

CHAPTER XXXIV. THE STANDARD OF HOLY LIVING.

1. *The Teachings of the Bible.*

If the sum and substance of sanctification and of good works is to do the will of God, we must know where this will of God is made known to the Christian. The answer to this question is *threefold*. God has revealed his will *a*. In the teachings of the *Bible*, as the word of God. *b*. In the personal *example* set by Christ and by godly Christian men. *c*. In the voice or testimony of the Holy *Spirit*, within the heart of the believer, who applies the Bible word and the Christian example to the individual case. A combination of this threefold witness constitutes the rule of life for the Christian.

The will of God has been revealed to men, in the first place, in the *law* of the Old and of the New Testaments. As to the Old Testament law, Christ has taught, that not "one jot or title shall pass away, till all things be accomplished" (Matth. 5:17). The commandments of the Old Testament, therefore, in so far as they are an exposition of the will of God, are not abrogated. There was in the "Mosaic Law" much that was purely local. The civil law had but a temporary value. The Council of the Apostles in Acts 15

expressly declared, that it "seemed good to the Holy Ghost" and them, to "lay no greater burden" upon the Gentile Christians than a few necessary things. As to the moral law, however, while the form was transitory, while the symbols and ceremonials have been fulfilled in Christ and have passed away, yet its *spiritual substance abides*. It is no longer the Mosaic law as such, that furnishes the rule of holy living. Its commandments, to a large extent, are of the nature of a shadow which vanishes before the light revealed in Christ. Therefore the apostle can say: "Let no man judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a feast day or a new moon or a Sabbath day; which are a shadow of the things to come, but the body is Christ's" (Col. 2:16, 17), and "Christ is the end of the law unto righteousness to every one that believeth" (Rom. 10:4).

Even the ten commandments of the *Decalogue* have in their form something of a transitory character. They are only prohibitive or negative, saying: Thou shalt not, and they command a worship of God and an abstaining from evil simply on the ground of God being the creator of the universe and the Saviour of Israel. The love of God which has been manifested to us in the work of redemption, was not revealed to them of old. Accordingly, man's obedience to these commandments could not then be based upon the grateful love of a pardoned sinner; and the love to the neighbor, as enjoined in Lev. 18:19, was not yet the love of a child of God for fellowmen, as members of the same household of God, as John writes: "Whosoever loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. Hereby we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and do his commandments" (I John 5:1, 2).

Nevertheless, as a *summary* of the moral law, as revealing the divine will for Israel, the "Decalogue" must always remain a *standard* of holy living which only needs to be read and understood in the light of the New Testament. Compare Christ's teaching in the sermon on the Mount: "Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time: Thou

shalt, etc. But I say unto you . . .,” and Paul in Romans 13:8, 9, “For he that loveth his neighbor hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not covet, and if there be any other commandment, it is summed up in this word, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.”

In the *New Testament* we find no code of laws, no formulated system of ethics extending over all the details of every day life. But Christ and his apostles have laid down the guiding *principles* for personal conduct and social relations, which only need to be applied to the various conditions of life, in order to direct our course into a knowing and doing of the will of God. Thus the Christian believer, who is in possession of both the Old and the New Testaments, has double cause to say with the Psalmist: “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path” (Ps. 119:105).

2. *Personal Example.*

Our Saviour, furthermore, has taught the will of God by his own *life*, which furnishes a complete pattern for a Christian walk and conversation. Christians are to think, to speak and to act in the same spirit that animated his words and deeds. His holy and spotless life shows us how to live. Not that we can exactly follow his specific example, in all respect, because he stood in a unique relation to man and God, but we can learn from him what he would have us do. Compare I John 2:6, “He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also to walk even as he walked,” and I Pet. 2:21, “Leaving you an example, that ye should follow his steps.”

In a similar manner, though with limitations, examples of holy living are offered to the believer in the lives of the patriarchs, prophets and apostles, in the *devout men* and women of the Bible, notably in St. Paul, of whom we know most. To a more limited degree, the fathers of the Christian Church, the founders of the various denominations, of congregations and societies, may serve to the members as

guides and patterns of Christian life, worthy of imitation. "Remember them that had the rule over you, which spake unto you the word of God; and considering the issue of their life, imitate their faith," Heb. 13:7. Finally, the spiritual heads of a Christian community, the pastor and the elders of the Church, the fathers and mothers of a Christian family, all these may and should be living expositors of the will of God, always provided, that no human authority can take precedence of the clear testimony of the Bible and that no human ideal can supersede Christ, the only absolute exemplar of perfection.

3. The Testimony of the Spirit.

The voice of the Holy Spirit who, through the medium of an enlightened conscience, explains and applies to us both the written Word and the personal example, constitutes the third standard or rule of spiritual life. Without the Spirit's light, the Bible remains a dead letter, insufficient for guidance through the variety of every day experiences. (I John 2:20, "Ye have an anointing from the Holy One and ye know all things.") This inward testimony may, at times, lead different Christians to different conclusions with regard to the true intent of the will of God. If so, believers may differ from each other as to various matters of practical life and not consider themselves bound by the judgment of their fellow-believers. "Who art thou that judgest the servant of another? to his own lord he standeth or falleth. Yet he shall be made to stand; for the Lord hath power to make him stand," Rom. 14:4.

If believers are faithful in following the light of knowledge granted to them for the time being, they may disagree from the views of other Christians. Such disagreement has apostolic sanction in Phil. 3:15, "If in anything ye are otherwise minded, even this shall God reveal unto you; only, whereunto we have already attained, by that same rule let us walk." Experience teaches that in the really important matters of Christian life and conduct, a faithful

searching of the Scriptures and a careful listening to the voice of the Spirit will, generally, result in a remarkable unanimity, if not in theory at least in practice, among true believers.

4. *Special Directions.*

In special cases, when an important step must be taken, the general direction of the Christian's life as given through the threefold agency just mentioned, may not seem sufficient for determining the course to be taken. If so, believers may claim the privilege of children of God to ask for special directions from above, as James writes: "If any of you lacketh wisdom, let him ask of God who giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing doubting" (James 1:5). Such directions were given in the days of the early apostolic Church, sometimes by the use of *ordinary* and sometimes by *extraordinary* means. When Paul and his companions had been forbidden to preach the word in "Asia" and had come down to Troas," a vision appeared to Paul in the night. There was a man of Macedonia standing, beseeching him and saying, Come over into Macedonia and help us" (Acts 16:9); and on the storm-tossed ship, sailing to Italy, Paul could announce to his fellow-passengers: "There stood by me this night an angel of the God whose I am, whom also I serve, saying, Fear not Paul: thou must stand before Cæsar, and lo, God hath granted thee all them that sail with thee" (Acts 27:23, 24).

Many testimonies of similar directions, through natural or supernatural occurrences, for the guidance of the Church and of individual Christians, have continued to be given to the present day. Frequently he desired clearness as to the course of action to be followed is given by a special degree of *cheerfulness* for doing the work which is to be done. Care must be taken, however, that the momentary and personal feeling does not run contrary to the plain teaching of Scripture or the clear voice of the Spirit.

The example of the apostles in Acts 1:24, in using the *lot*

to decide who of the disciples should take the place of Judas, as one of the Twelve, and numerous instances from the Old Testament, have led many Christians to the employment also of this special agency for ascertaining the will of God under certain circumstances. When used in childlike faith and with earnest prayer, the decision of the lot has sometimes proved an evident blessing to the Church and to individual Christians. But such special direction must never be sought merely as a cover for carelessness or in unbelief. After all, cases will remain, where the Lord does not give the desired positive direction by outward signs or inner voice, or where the believer does not feel free to ask for special direction. The safest way then appears to be that of choosing that course which requires "the most of Christian faith and of self-denial for the flesh."

5. *The Incentive to Holy Living.*

The question, as to what is the true incentive for the believer's doing the will of God and "following after righteousness and godliness," as Paul calls it (I Tim. 6:11), is doubtless well answered by saying: *Grateful love* to Christ, our Redeemer, is the best motive to holiness. It is true, the apostle several times speaks of *fear* as an element in sanctification, as when he writes in Phil. 2:12, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" and II Cor. 7:1, "Let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." Yet the same apostle seems to exclude all fear from the state of grace, calling it a sign of bondage, when he says: "Ye received not the spirit of bondage again unto fear, but ye received the spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba, Father." Evidently there are two kinds of fear, viz., the fear of reverence and the slavish dread of punishment. The child of God as such knows but the fear of losing Christ and his salvation. Such fear is quite consistent with the state of grace, because it is identical with childlike reverence for the will of God.

In the beginning of Christian life, this fear may yet contain a considerable element of selfishness. The young Christian is afraid not only of losing the grace of Christ, but also of the judgment and of being cast into hell fire. However, the more he progresses in sanctification, the more such negative fear will give way to confidence and affection, as John writes: "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear," (I John 4:18). The fear of condemnation, as well as the mere selfish desire to enjoy the blessings of heaven, irrespective of truth and holiness, belong to the things that must pass away.

True sanctification, therefore, is the fruit of the *love of God*, "which hath been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Ghost," (Rom. 5:5). This love is *a. Grateful* love for mercy received, because our sins were forgiven and our transgression is healed. *b. Personal* love of the Saviour, who not only loved us so much that he died for us, but who also is now our best friend, our daily helper, our advocate at the throne of God and our only sure hope for the future. *c. Love of right and truth* itself, as it is revealed to us in the will of God. This is the New Testament fulfillment of the ideal proclaimed in the 118th Psalm as the desire of the Old Testament believer: "Thy testimonies are my delight and my counsellors. Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage. O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day. Thy testimonies are wonderful: therefore doth my soul keep them," (vv. 24, 54, 97, 129).

CHAPTER XXXV. PRAYER.

1. *Meaning and Purpose of Prayer.*

All exercise of religion presupposes prayer, which is a universally acknowledged part of the worship due to God. It is not exclusively a Christian practice but is connected with almost every form of religious belief. It is man's approach to God and the expression of his adoration, confession and supplication to the object of his worship. In

particular, however, is every successive stage in the Christian's experience of personal salvation connected with and conditioned by prayer. While the objective power which animates and sustains the new life of the believer is the power of the Holy Spirit, there can be no personal *appropriation* of the divine grace and life except through prayer. Prayer on the part of man answers to revelation on the part of God. As in revelation God makes himself known to man in his grace, so in prayer man makes himself known to God in his need and in his trust. Prayer is the holding out of the hand for receiving the gift of God, the breathing of the divine atmosphere in which the believer is placed.

The primary object and purpose of prayer is, therefore, not that of being a moral exercise for self-improvement, a sort of spiritual gymnastics, as some regard it, nor is it simply the natural expression of religious sentiment, but it is a *communing* of the soul with God. It is true, much that goes by the name of prayer is meaningless and useless, as when the prayer-mill of the Tibetan innumerable times revolves the sacred words: *Om-ma-ni-pad-me-hum*, or when Christians (as our Saviour said) "use vain repetitions, as the Gentiles do," even though they pray "the Lord's prayer," thinking "that they shall be heard for their much speaking," (Matth. 6:7). Neither is it a real prayer to God, if offered in order to be seen or heard of man, for a show of piety or of ability, and to win the praise of men. "Verily," says Christ, "they have received their reward," but not from God.

True prayer is directed to God and not to man, and it has nothing else in view but our need and the grace and glory of God. It is a sacred *duty* and a precious *privilege* of the children of God to pray every where and at all times, (I Thess. 5:17). The four Evangelists tell us that Jesus Christ himself, while on earth, was in constant communion of prayer with the Father in heaven, and both he and the apostles exhort the believer to pray frequently, fervently and perseveringly, to pray in the hour of joy and of afflic-

tion, when at rest and while at work, in private and in public, alone and in company with fellow-believers (Eph. 6:18; Phil. 4:6).

2. *What to Pray for.*

The term prayer includes a fivefold object in addressing God, viz., *a. Worship* or adoration. "O come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our maker," (Ps. 95:6). "Worthy art thou, our Lord and our God, to receive the glory and the honor" (Rev. 5:11). *b. Thanksgiving* for temporal and spiritual blessings. "Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most high," (Ps. 50:14). "Giving thanks always for all things to God, even the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ," (Eph. 5:20). *c. Confession* of sin and confession of faith. "I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord, and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin," (Ps. 32:5): "Thomas said unto him, My Lord and my God," (John 20:28). *d. Petitions* for temporal and spiritual blessings. "In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be known unto God," (Phil. 4:6). "Truly my soul waiteth upon God; from him cometh my salvation," (Ps. 62:1). *e. Intercessions* for individuals and for God's people in general. "I exhort, therefore, that supplications, prayers, intercessions, thanksgivings be made for all men," (I Tim. 2:1). "To which end we also pray always for you, that our God may count you worthy of your calling and fulfill every desire of goodness and every work of faith, with power," (II Thess. 1:11).

Among the prayers recorded for general use, in the Bible or in Prayer and Hymn Books of the Church, some represent mainly or altogether one of the forms of prayer just mentioned, *e.g.*, the *Te Deum*—worship and adoration; Psalm 103 and others—thanksgiving; Psalm 51—confession of sin, etc. But most prayers, both private and public, as is natural, *combine* these different elements, petitions and

supplications being especially prominent. As to the subjects of these petitions that are most desired and prayed for, the unconverted man, if he prays at all, will probably ask for temporal blessings only, for preservation in danger and deliverance from trouble, for health and wealth, for pleasure and earthly prosperity. The believer who has learned to know that the most needful gift is the grace of God and the Holy Spirit, desires this gift for himself and others, in preference and if need be in place of temporal blessings.

This order of placing spiritual and eternal interests first and earthly or temporal needs second, is observed in the prayer which Christ taught his disciples to pray. The "*Lord's Prayer*" is a model prayer, because it embodies the principal needs of the individual Christian and of the Church of Christ within the smallest compass of words. It is, however, not a binding formula, nor has its frequent repetition as such any special merit. Prayer, as little as breathing, can be bound within fixed forms, although certain definite rules and models of prayer, especially for public services, have been found wholesome and necessary. But there must be some variety. Even the Lord's Prayer is not always the best expression of the heart's needs and aspirations. It contains only petitions and no thanksgiving, and it does not embody the New Testament plea, "for Christ's sake." It was given before the work of redemption was fully accomplished.

3. *Prayer in the Name of Jesus.*

The Saviour directed his disciples to pray in his name. "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. Verily, verily, I say unto you, If ye shall ask anything of the Father, he will give it you in my name. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name, ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full," (John 14:13 and 16:23, 24). By this prayer in the name of Jesus we understand *a*. An *appeal* to the person

and work of Christ as the ground of our plea. *b.* A prayer offered in spiritual *fellowship* with Christ, the mediator between God and man and our intercessor with the Father. The triune God is accessible to sinful man only through Jesus Christ, the Saviour. Hence every prayer to be acceptable must be offered in the name of Jesus, though it is not necessary, that this be always expressed in the form of address or in the appeal "for Christ's sake."

As most of the books of the Bible were composed before the advent of the Redeemer, the prayers recorded in the Bible are generally *addressed to God* Almighty, to the Lord (Jehovah) or to the Father, not to Christ. In view of the gracious revelation of salvation granted to us through his Son, however, it seems most appropriate for the repentant sinner, as well as for the Christian believer in general, when conscious of his need of divine grace, to address himself to the *Saviour*, Christ, "the friend of sinners," the mediator of divine grace, our intercessor with the father, as well as the head of the kingdom of heaven. Compare Acts 7:59; II Cor. 12:8. The grateful and confident prayer of the mature Christian and the united prayers of the Church are suitably addressed to the *Father*, who through Jesus Christ has become our father. Ephes. 3:14, "I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," and Acts 4:24. Strictly speaking, the New Testament records no prayer addressed to the *Holy Spirit*, who represents the immanent rather than the transcendent revelation of God; but there can be no valid objection against using this form of address also.

4. *Hearing of Prayer.*

Prayer in the name of Jesus has the promise of a divine answer. The believer prays relying upon Christ and in spiritual union with Christ, the Holy Spirit praying within him, as Paul says: "The Spirit helpeth our infirmity: for we know not how to pray as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered," (Rom. 8:26). A prayer thus endorsed cannot

remain unanswered. But not every prayer is a prayer in the name of Jesus, even though it contain the words: "for Christ's sake." Accordingly the promise: "Ask and it shall be given" does not apply, first of all, to any sinful wish or to petitions offered in unbelief or indifference. Furthermore, Christians sometimes pray for things which are not best for them (Matth. 20:22, II Cor. 12:8, 9). In all *temporal* concerns, therefore, and even with regard to the manner in which spiritual blessings are expected, the Christian's prayer must follow the rule which Jesus himself observed, when he said: "Not mine but thy will be done" (Matth. 26:39).

Many in our day doubt or deny, that prayers for temporal good can have any effect on the action of God in *providence*, because they think God can and will never change the course once decreed nor the working of natural laws. To their minds all such prayer is useless, a mere form, as Bushnell said, "a kind of dumb-bell exercise, good as exercise, but never to be answered." However, the Christian's God is under no other necessity but that of his own will and freely controls the realm of nature and of man. The men of the Bible certainly prayed for definite temporal gifts and results, and the experience of believers confirms the conviction that such prayers *are answered*. There are occasions, when a Christian feels that he may ask for a special thing, such as recovery from sickness, relief of want or the fulfillment of some special wish, in full assurance that the prayer will be granted. Such cases are rather the exception than the rule. Christ gave to his disciples power to *heal the sick* by prayer, but they made rare use of that power. The Apostle Paul did not heal Timothy who often had "infirmities," nor his own "thorn in the flesh." He counts such a miraculous power of prayer among the special gifts bestowed upon certain persons for the purpose of advancing Christ's kingdom and thus serving a higher end. While, perhaps, many Christians in our day do not exercise the power of effectual prayer as they should, the

special gift of faith healing appears to exist sometimes in persons who are, otherwise, not faithful nor sanctified and who may finally be rejected, in spite of having done great things in the name of Christ. Compare Matth. 7:22, "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not by thy name do many mighty works?" and I Cor. 13:2.

5. *Can the Departed Pray for Us?*

We are not positively told in Scripture that the blessings of intercessory prayer are limited to this *present life*. The prayer of the rich man in Hades (Luke 16) and the parable of the unjust steward who expects to be received by his friends in "the everlasting tabernacles," have been taken as implying that the departed can pray for the living. It may be added that it would seem unnatural to think, that the departed believer at once ceases to take a prayerful interest in the cause of Christ on earth, while the Saviour's highpriestly intercession continues. If believers are to judge the world together with Christ, will they not *continue* to pray with him for the saving of souls, as long as it is possible? However, as the Bible gives no positive declaration on this point, evangelical doctrine cannot regard it as well established. We are not authorized to implore the intercession of the Saints in our behalf, much less can such intercession supersede Christ, or open a door to heaven other than the door of grace and faith which is opened by the Redeemer.

6. *Prayer for the Departed?*

Closely connected with the preceding question is the other, viz., whether or not the Christian believer may intercede for those who have departed this life. The answer depends largely on the view taken in regard to the intermediate state. So much, however, is certain that the Bible nowhere directly enjoins or authorizes such prayer for the departed, least of all by the reading of soul masses and requiems for the benefit of the dead, or by paying money to

Church and priest, for the redemption of a soul from purgatory. On the other hand, it must be acknowledged, that the simple prayer of intercession for a departed relative or friend is not prohibited in Scripture. Only we should remember that those who have been removed from our world and association, are in the hands of a God who is more compassionate and merciful than we can ever be.

CHAPTER XXXVI. CHRISTIAN PERSEVERANCE.

1. *Can a Believer Fall from Grace?*

A disputed question, in connection with the duty resting upon every Christian to "follow after sanctification," is, whether or not a believer can fall away and be lost? The answer depends largely on the meaning given to the term "believer." When taken in the ordinary sense of one who confesses the name of Christ or who professes conversion, Scripture and Christian experience answer in the affirmative: "A believer *can fall* from grace." For Christ himself warned his followers to beware of apostacy (Matth. 7:21, John 8:31) and the apostles repeat this warning in unmistakable language, cautioning the believer against a possible and fatal falling away. See I Pet. 1:17, "Pass the time of your sojourning in fear, knowing that ye were redeemed, not with corruptible things," etc.; I Cor. 10:12, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall;" and Hebr. 6:4, 6, "As touching those who were once enlightened and tasted of the heavenly gift. . . , and then fell away, it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance."

Some would limit this possibility of an absolute apostacy to such as have first *fully tasted* the grace of God and then committed the "sin against the Holy Ghost," because only a continued resistance against the full manifestation of divine grace can produce such hardening of the heart, that the falling away is "without repentance." Others, and especially those of the Calvinist persuasion, on the contrary,

hold that the *regenerate* can *never* fall from grace, because the life of God when once quickened in the human soul cannot die. Certain passages in the first epistle of John seem to support this view, viz., I John 2:19 and 3:9, "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us." "Whosoever is begotten of God doeth no sin, because his seed abideth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is begotten of God." Yet the same apostle who teaches that he who falls away has never been a child of God, nevertheless earnestly *warns* the believer: "My little children, let no man lead you astray, he that doeth righteousness is righteous; he that doeth sin is of the devil" (I John 3:7). The Apostle Paul not only frequently exhorts his readers, not to lose the grace of God which they have, but mentions cases where this had been done, saying: "Holding faith and a good conscience which some having thrust from them made shipwreck concerning the faith: of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander" (I Tim. 1:19).

When the question turns on what may be expected of God's faithfulness, there can be no doubt, but that *God* is both *able* and willing to keep us from falling. The good Shepherd will not let any one take his sheep out of his hand (John 10:28) and the gifts and the calling of God are without repentance (Rom. 11:29). St. John who generally regards human affairs from the view-point of final results, properly sums up the course of spiritual development in the declaration, that those who fall away never were true children of God. But from the ordinary point of view which follows the Christian's life in its changing aspects of increase and decrease, of victories and defeats, it must be admitted that, as the spiritual life grows stronger, it may also grow weaker and may even die again. We are warranted in believing in a *preservation* of the believer as guaranteed by the power and love of God, but *not* in unalterable "*perseverance* of the saints." There are examples of men who to all human appearance at one time were

children of God, yet have fallen from grace. This danger diminishes, as sanctification progresses, but it does not disappear altogether until the last chain that binds the Christian to a sinful world, is broken.

2. *Groundless Fears.*

Such an absolute falling away as is referred to in Hebr. 6:4-6, can, however, not occur by a man's being overcome of sin suddenly or unconsciously as it were. A Christian may fall into gross sins in this way, but the sin against the Holy Spirit, which is absolute, is something different, is a spiritual suicide which results from continued living in sin and hardening the heart. Accordingly, men who really fear that they may have committed that sin show by this very fear that their soul, or their heart, is *not dead*. There may have been a dangerous approach to that fatal rejection of the grace of God. A frequent yielding to temptation may gradually lead to a willing and conscious commission of sin, which temporarily knows of no repentance. But if at any time this state of apostacy and service of sin is followed by a realization of the wickedness of such a condition, an earnest regret of the unfaithfulness manifested and a sincere desire for forgiveness, the comforting promises of the word of God will eventually restore to the backslider the lost sense of the grace of the Saviour, who says: "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

With regard to those who show absolutely no sign of repentance, it is not for us to decide, whether or not they may have committed the unpardonable sin. Even where for the time being there is not the least desire for deliverance from the slavery of sin, but on the contrary a reveling in conscious commission of evil, or else that hopeless despair and the "sorrow of the world," of which the apostle writes that it "worketh death" (II Cor. 7:10), no

man should pronounce judgment over a fellow-man, however wicked and hardened he may seem to be.

3. *Assurance of Future Salvation.*

The Roman Catholic teaching regards an humble uncertainty both as to our present and future salvation as one of the Christian virtues. Protestant Christians believe that it is *possible* to have an assurance of both. But neither of these can be based upon anything that man *has* or *does*. Our present salvation is not assured by the degree of sanctification which we have attained, nor by the regular use of the means of grace which we may enjoy, nor finally by any special experience of divine grace that has been made in the past. The best works which we have done are tainted with sin. The means of grace offered by the Church, such as baptism, holy communion and attendance at divine worship, do not have a magic influence to make our personal salvation certain. The experience of divine grace in the past is no sure pledge of our present standing. But these same manifestations of spiritual life, when built upon the foundation of an humble trust in the unchanging love of God in Christ Jesus, do become pledges of our present salvation and adoption as children of God. We can say with the Apostle John: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren" and "Hereby know we that we dwell in him and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit" (John 3:14 and 4:13).

Essentially the same assurances are given us concerning our *future* and *final* salvation. It rests first and foremost upon the unchanging faithfulness of the *divine promises* pledged to us in the death and resurrection of our Saviour, and confirmed by the witness of the Spirit in our hearts and the victories so far gained over the temptations of world and sin. We know that He who "began the good work," will not leave it unfinished, but "will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:6), that He who

saved us in the past, is able to "save to the uttermost them that draw near unto God through him" (Hebr. 7:25), and that He who created even the first desire to be saved will uphold this desire and cause it to prevail even to the end (Luke 22:32). In this sense, therefore, future salvation can be to believers a matter of grateful and joyful assurance, even as it was to the Apostle Paul in Romans 8:38, 39. This assurance, though at times veiled by divers trials or by reason of human unfaithfulness, will at other times rise to a glorious triumph; while the fact that the grace of God does not work irresistibly, will preserve in the child of God that humble watchfulness, which is needed against any carnal security and which will constantly urge him on to make his calling and election even more sure (II Cor. 12:9, II Pet. 1:10).

Part Fifth—The Church.

CHAPTER XXXVII. ORIGIN AND NATURE OF THE CHURCH.

1. *The Need of Fellowship.*

While the primary object of saving grace is the salvation of the individual man, this is not its final aim. Christ came to establish a kingdom, the *kingdom* of heaven among men and this divine plan meets the human need of *fellowship*. Man is a social being: God himself, the eternal ideal of perfection, has been revealed to us as a Trinity. The human race was, from the first, constituted a family and intended to grow into a people, and a state or community. Furthermore, as every descendant of Adam shares the common depravity of the race, so he also has a share in the common salvation gained by Christ, the Son of Man and our brother. God's plan includes the continued salvation of man by his fellow-man.

Accordingly the principle of *fellowship* is an integral part of the Christian religion. The followers of Christ, whatever their position in life may be, their nationality or their intellectual culture, are knit together by a common bond of union. They are members of a body, of which Christ is the head. In the course of time, the spiritual union of Christian fellowship has largely been replaced by outward *uniformity* of creed, ritual and church government and a difference of standpoint has developed between the Catholic and the Protestant Churches. From the Catholic view-point, the *Church* comes *first* and the individual receives salvation only through the mediation of the Church ["*Extra Ecclesiam nulla salus*"], while to the Protestant, the Church is rather the union of individual believers. The Catholic principle is: "Where the Church is, there is Christ and Christians," the Protestant: "Where Christ and Christians are, there is the Church." But the necessity

of Church fellowship is equally recognized from both stand-points, because it is grounded in the social and religious nature of man. Only through fellowship can the individual Christian attain to a deeper apprehension of the truth, as it is revealed in Christ Jesus, and Christian fellowship is the necessary field for the exercise of vital religion. This need has been supplied by the founding of the Christian Church.

2. *The Divine-Human Character of the Church.*

The Church is not a mere human Institution in the sense of ordinary organizations and associations founded by men. For it was founded by Christ, the God-man, and was divinely endowed by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ established its leading principles, ordained its solemn rites and appointed its first officers, but the actual history of the Church began with the day of Pentecost, when the Spirit descended upon the assembly of disciples and when Church-membership was given by the rite of baptism. The *Church* is not the same as the *kingdom* of God, but it is devoted to the advancement of the kingdom through the preaching and teaching of the Gospel. The kingdom is the end and the Church a means to that end. It is *divine* in its origin and divine in its aim. It supersedes all national and social distinctions of the past, recognizing but one great division among men, viz., those who believe in Jesus Christ as their Saviour, and those who do not. The Church has the promise, that it shall conquer the world and overcome all opposition, until its boundaries shall be coextensive with the ends of the earth (Matth. 16:18).

We call it the *Church*, Kirke or *κυριακῇ* (belonging to the Lord), because it is the temporary and visible form of the kingdom of God, as Paul writes: "Ye are of the household of God, being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief cornerstone; . . . in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God in the spirit. To the intent, that now unto the

principalities and the powers in the heavenly places might be made known through the Church the manifold wisdom of God (Eph. 2:20, 22 and 3:10).

But the Church is also an *Ecclesia*, ἐκκλησία (an assembly of the people), established on earth with *earthly forms*. As it was founded by the instrumentality of men, so it must adapt itself to earthly needs and environments, in matters of proclamation, ritual and church government. Furthermore the Church, though not “of the world,” is in a sinful world and partakes of the imperfections of earthly conditions, both as regards the spiritual state of its members and in its institutions and doctrines, so far as the latter are formulated by imperfect men. The Church is not *infallible*. She cannot ward off every insincere intruder, nor guarantee the spiritual character of all her members. She cannot avoid all misconception of the great facts and truths of salvation entrusted to her stewardship nor prevent all misuse of her sacred privileges. While it is her duty, by a constant and energetic effort to conquer sin and error, without and within the Church, and thus aim at perfection, she cannot expect to reach this goal of perfection, until the head of the Church returns in glory, “to present the Church to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish” (Eph. 5:27).

3. *The Visible and the Invisible Church.*

Gradually, as the borders of the Church were enlarged, it became necessary to distinguish not only between the universal Church and the individual Church or denomination, in which the universal Church takes local and temporal form, but also between the true spiritual Church, representing the kingdom of God, which is largely an invisible Church and the external, organized Christian community, or the *visible Church*. To the latter belong all those who profess the name of Christ as the Lord and are in any way connected with and under the care of the Church Institu-

tion. This visible Church was compared by Christ to a dragnet cast into the sea which gathers all manner of fish, good and bad. The members of this visible Church are not as such children of God and heirs of the kingdom of God, but the Church is to train them and fit them for Christ and his kingdom.

The *invisible* Church, on the other hand, comprises all true believers, the fellowship of the saints who, though widely scattered throughout the visible Church, are knit together by an invisible bond of union. No single branch or division of the visible Church has an exclusive claim to represent the kingdom of God, no church organization is exclusively the true Church. The Lord has in every denomination those who are his, because they have the Spirit of Christ. This invisible Church is the life-giving breath, the soul, within the external Church-body, the "*holy catholic Church*," and the confession of the apostolic creed: "Credo in unam sanctam ecclesiam catholicam" attains its true meaning when applied to this largely invisible Christian Church.

4. *Merits of the Visible Church.*

While some Christians overestimate the value of external Church connection as such, many others are not only indifferent to the merits of the visible Church organization, but assume even a hostile attitude toward it. A false *separatism* and individualism needs to be reminded that the Church, even as an external organization, has great claims on our gratefulness, because of the eminent *services* which she has rendered and is constantly rendering, not only to the cause of Christianity, but also to humanity at large.

The Church has preserved and spread the Holy Scriptures, erected and maintained houses of worship, educated and ordained ministers and missionaries, and provided the means of grace and sacraments. She has brought joy and comfort into millions of Christian homes, by hallowing the marriage relation and the family life; has founded schools

and colleges, established orphanages and asylums, mitigated or abolished the evils of slavery, raised woman to the position due to her, promoted arts and sciences and in many other ways benefited the social as well as the religious condition of mankind. Without a visible Church organization, Christianity itself could not have continued unto the present time. The individual Christian, however advanced he may be, can not look with indifference upon the institution, by whose instrumentality he has been brought to a saving knowledge of the truth, which regularly supplies the means of grace, instructs the young, comforts the bereaved and tenders the last consolation to the dying.

The acknowledgment of these facts involves the *obligation* of the Christian to connect himself with some branch of the visible Church, to support its enterprises by giving liberally to the Church causes and advocating her claims, and by conforming to the rules of the Church in his walk and conversation. The tendency to keep aloof from Church connection is owing, in most cases, either to a false selfishness and conceit, which thinks itself above the common needs of believers, or else to the desire of evading the obligations resting upon church-members, financially, socially or morally.

5. *National and Independent Churches.*

Since the reign of Constantine, Christianity has become the established religion of entire nations, so that in certain countries the Church has become identified with the people as a *national Church*, e.g., the Greek Catholic Church in Russia, the Roman Catholic in France, Spain and Central or South America, the Anglican Church in England, the Lutheran in Denmark and Sweden, etc. Here then every member of the nation is counted as belonging to the national Church. Can such a national Church be regarded as a true Church? The testimony of the New Testament scriptures is to the effect, that the apostolic Church comprised only those who by their own free choice belonged to it, not men

who were born into the Church by virtue of their nationality. The establishment of national Churches has tended to lower the standard of Christianity and to create formalism and superstition or indifference. Some of the Reformers of the sixteenth century endeavored to return to the apostolic ideal, but found it impossible, because of the low spiritual state of the Christian world in their days, and yielding to necessity accepted the definition of the Church which makes it simply a "*Coetus Vocatorum*," an Institution for educating the people up to the true standard of Christianity, not a "*Communio Fidelium*" (communion of believers).

For all that, something may be said in favor of national Churches. When Christ, speaking in parables about the coming of the kingdom of heaven, illustrated its development by the picture of "Tares in the field," the "Dragnet cast into the sea and gathering of every kind," and the "Mustard seed" growing into a tree in whose branches the birds build nests, he must have foreseen a time, when through the preaching of the Gospel entire nations would become Christianized, without being thoroughly converted. We note also that the Apostle Paul, in speaking of mixed marriages between believers and unbelievers writes: "The unbelieving husband is sanctified in the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified in the brother (husband); else were your children unclean; but now are they holy" (that is, set apart for Christ's kingdom) I Cor. 7:14.

There are some *advantages* gained from these national organizations, viz.: *a.* The general *religious instruction* of the young as a part of their schooling. *b.* The opportunity which it offers for bringing all classes of people under *religious influence*, in baptism, confirmation and marriage, etc. *c.* Certain forms of ritual and Church government, not to say of doctrine, seem to *fit* an entire nation better than any other form. It may be added that the national Churches are not so much more lacking in spiritual life, compared with the free Churches, as to regard this point

as decisive. Nevertheless the *independent* Church appears to be the more perfect form of Church organization, because it comes nearer to the apostolic ideal and seems better calculated to promote individual Christian life and to maintain the spiritual character of the Church.

6. *Relation between Church and State.*

The Church is to be a blessing to the world, to regenerate human society and to leaven all earthly institutions; but it is not a rival of the State nor a substitute for ordinary social and political organizations. Hence that relation between Church and State would seem proper and desirable which will give to *both free scope* without mutual interference, so that the Church does not attempt to control the State nor the State to control the Church. "Render therefore unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's and unto God the things that are God's" (Matth. 22:21). As Paul wrote to the Roman Christians: "Let every soul be in subjection to the higher powers; for there is no power but of God; and the powers that be are ordained of God" (Rom. 13:1). The Romanist claim, that the Church has a right to exercise secular as well as spiritual oversight and rule, has the testimony of Scripture and of history against it. But neither must kings or civil magistrates assume authority or dominion over the Church.

The fact that in many countries the Church receives financial aid from the civil government and in return acknowledges the authority of rulers and parliaments in Church affairs, has produced much confusion and injury. We do not say, that the welfare of either Church or State requires an absolute separation between the two. Both have a *common interest* in many matters, such as the education of the young, the marriage relation and social reforms, and may co-operate on the principle of equal rights and duties. An absolute exclusion of religion from the institutions of the State is neither possible nor desirable. The Church should exercise a wholesome influence upon the State and

the public school, as well as upon the enactment and observance of beneficial laws; and in turn, it should allow the State a corresponding supervision over its own organization. In brief, a free Church, loyal to the best interests of the State, and a free State, recognizing the good services of the Church, appears to be the ideal to be followed.

CHAPTER XXXVIII. ESSENTIALS OF THE CHURCH.

1. *Criterion of a True Church.*

Although no Church is found anywhere on earth, that is perfect, the relative superiority of one branch of the Church universal over the other is evident. Not all the denominations now in existence have an equal right to the name of a Christian Church, which is conditioned upon their fulfilling the function of the Church, to manifest the redeeming work of Christ and to win the world for the kingdom of God. There may be true Christians in a church organization, which does not provide any means of grace for nourishing the spiritual life of her members or which has subverted the very foundations of a Church of Christ.

But what are these *essentials*, the necessary characteristics and requirements of a true Church? Since the Christian Church, in the course of time, through various causes has become divided into many parts, each part is apt to consider their distinguishing marks of greatest importance. Some make the apostolic succession and the authority of an infallible Church and pope the condition of Church fellowship. Some regard their form of Church government, be it the "historic episcopate" or the "presbytery" or the "congregational polity," as indispensable. Others declare matters of ritual, the form of administering the sacraments and the like, the decisive test of a true Church. But, however valuable and important these matters of distinction may be, must not all Christians agree that the real, fundamental requisite of the Church of Christ is the one pointed out by

Paul in I Cor. 3:11: "Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Christ?" The unreserved acceptance of the *person and work of Christ*, as presented to us in the Bible must remain the unchanging foundation of the Church's faith and practice. It was when Peter, with the apostles, confessed: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," that the answer was made: "Upon this rock I will build my Church and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it" (Matth. 16:18). This, then, is the first essential, the Gospel of Jesus Christ as found in the scriptures—the corner-stone of every true Christian Church.

But this first essential includes a second one, viz., the observing of the ordinances instituted by Christ, especially the holy *sacraments*, even as we read of the first Christian Church: "They that received his word were baptized... and they continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers" (Acts 2:41, 42). "Word and sacraments" are the two principal instrumentalities for awakening and promoting the spiritual life of the Church. They are largely objective in their character and independent of the persons who administer them. Their maintenance in any branch of the Christian Church ought to suffice to entitle the same to the name of a true Church.

2. Churches and Sects.

Two extremes should be avoided in applying this test of word and sacrament and determining the standing of any Church organization. The one is that of limiting the standard of "true church essentials" to certain large or old established Churches and to denounce all the more recent or the smaller denominations as sects. The other extreme is that of finding fault with the older Churches and declaring them corrupt, simply on the ground of their being old and perhaps showing less vitality or spirituality, than the newer organizations.

The existence of *denominational distinctions* is not in

itself a misfortune or an injury to the cause of Christ, not something to be denounced or lamented. True unity is spiritual rather than formal; it consists in manifoldness rather than in sameness. There was such a distinction in the Christian Church from the first, between the Gentile Church and the Jewish Christians, the Churches of Asia and the Churches of Macedonia, etc. The Saviour did not say: "there shall be one fold and one shepherd" (A. V.), but, "there shall be one flock, one shepherd" (R. V.). The variety of denominations is a blessing to the Church universal (catholic), if they are so many *embodiments* of the kingdom of Christ, each presenting some special features or aspects of the one true Church of God. Their right of existence rests on the natural and needful variety of human form and thought. The Lord himself clearly, from time to time, has called new denominations into being, in accordance with the needs of the age or of the people. They have been the means for deepening the spirituality of the Church, increasing the missionary activity and giving emphasis to certain truths, otherwise overlooked.

There is, however, a false subjectivism and separatism, which has caused divisions on no other ground but that of selfishness and conceit. These may rightly be termed "sects." For a sect means a member of the body of Christ which is *cut off* from that body. Sects cling to what is one-sided and partial, they emphasize fragments of the truth, to the detriment of the whole truth, substituting the un-essential for the essential and making human ordinances or teachings the main issue.

3. *Creeds and Confessions.*

It is proper and desirable, that each separate Church organization should have its creed or confession of faith, setting forth its understanding of the leading truths of Christianity. As every nation has its national character indicated in its constitution, customs and language, so each Church naturally declares its position in certain articles of

faith. These confessions of faith serve a threefold purpose.

a. To be a *guide* to the members of the Church, supporting and promoting their growth in Christian knowledge and life. *b.* To be a *banner* of the Church before the sister denominations, marking its individuality of faith and practice. *c.* To be a *declaration* of faith before an unbelieving world.

However, in order to accomplish these objects, the creed of the Church should be: *a.* A positive declaration of the truth, rather than a polemical document. *b.* A practical and popular statement, setting forth the actual faith of the Church, rather than a definition of theological terms or a discussion of metaphysical questions. *c.* Such a creed should not be regarded as fixed for all time to come and unalterable, so as to do away with the duty of searching the Scriptures and comprehending the revelation of God more fully. All human creeds are at best imperfect expositions of the truth and not infallible.

4. *Sunday and the House of God.*

Among the essentials of the Church, in the sense of things required for the maintenance and work of the Church, may well be counted the observance of the "Lord's day" and the regular meeting together of Christian people for worship in some consecrated place.

The setting apart of the first day of the week as the *Lord's day* and a Sabbath, or rest day, is an institution of the Christian Church, based upon the foundation of the Mosaic law and the divine order as manifested in nature and history. It is *not* the *Jewish Sabbath* as such that is of binding authority. Neither Christ nor his apostles ever enjoined upon the disciples the duty of keeping the Sabbath day and St. Paul in writing to Gentile believers declares: "Let no man judge you in respect of a feast day, or a new moon or a Sabbath day: which are a shadow of the things to come, but the body is Christ's" (Col. 2:16, 17). The Mosaic prescriptions with regard to the form of keeping the

Sabbath are abrogated, but the Sabbath itself, as "made for man" (Mk. 2:27), is of abiding obligation, because of the blessing which it brings to the individual, to the community and to the Church of Christ. The *Old Testament Sabbath* was a gift of God's goodness to Israel, intended to promote their physical, mental and spiritual good and built upon the record of the creation and the deliverance from the bondage of Egypt. The Christian Church, recognizing the value of a weekly day of rest and worship, from the first century began to observe the first day of the week, Sunday, as the Lord's day, because on that day Christ rose from the dead and on the same day the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the Church on Pentecost. That day, therefore, was set apart for rest and worship, as well as for missionary work and gifts of charity (1 Cor. 16:2; Acts 20:7; Rev. 1:10).

The history of the Christian Church has amply proved the great value, nay the absolute necessity of a faithful observance of such a Christian Sabbath day. It corresponds to a *threefold need* of man, physical, intellectual and spiritual rest and growth. And what to the true believer is a simple necessity of love, may to the weak and indifferent Christian be a necessity of educational discipline for his spiritual support. The Christian Church should endeavor to guard the Christian observance of Sunday against all anti-Christian tendencies, in order that a stated opportunity be given to all to hear the word of God and to enjoy the means of grace.

The need of a special day set apart as the Lord's day, implies also the need of a special *place of worship*, where Christian people can meet for united worship, for mutual exhortation and edification and for united counsel as to how best to carry on the work of the Lord. Whether the appointed place of worship be a grand and beautiful cathedral or a plain and humble meeting-house, the Christian congregation needs some building dedicated to the service of God and calculated to direct thought, feeling and will

heavenward. Though the believer is free to make every place a house of God, he can not with impunity forsake the assembling together of Christians (Heb. 10:25), and he may well test the degree of his Christian fervor and of his church loyalty by the question, as to whether he can truly say with the Psalmist: "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts. For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness" (Ps. 84:1, 10).

CHAPTER XXXIX. ELEMENTS OF PROSPERITY IN THE CHURCH.

1. *Spirituality and Revivals.*

It is not enough that a church organization have existence. It must also contain elements of growth and prosperity. Just as the spiritual life of the individual Christian must progress, if it is not to become stagnant or retrograde, so the life of the Church must grow, within and without. Here the following points may be noted as of special importance for churchly prosperity and as tests of vitality. *First* of all, a Church should rank high or low in the scale of true churches according to the measure of *spiritual life* manifested among its members. While no church organization has yet succeeded in admitting only regenerate persons or purging its lists from every unworthy name, there should be an earnest effort in a true Church of Christ to represent as much as possible the kingdom of God, by an increasing spiritual knowledge and a consistent Christian walk on the part of its members. According to apostolic admonition, Church members are to "exhort one another and build each other up" (1 Thess. 5:11). Pastors and people should use all the means at their command to promote vital religion, by services calculated to quicken spiritual life and to bring about a revival of religion.

It is desirable that there should be organizations and associations formed for the upbuilding of the Church, by the cultivation of spiritual gifts and graces and for the cure and care of souls. In these respects, the Church may keep in view the institutions of the apostolic Church as a pattern, without, however, limiting itself to any transitory form. Here belong Christian Endeavor Societies, King's Daughters, and other associations, or Class meetings, etc. Compare Eph. 5:19, "Speaking one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs."

2. *Missionary Work.*

Again, a Church will the more deserve the name of a living Church, in proportion to the zeal with which it labors for the extension of the kingdom of God. A live Church must be a working Church, must endeavor to spread the Gospel at home and abroad and seek to win souls for Christ, both among the *heathen* and among *nominal Christians*. As to *home mission* work, the Church will find many opportunities for needful and successful effort in providing for a Christian training of the young, in Bible Societies and Young Men's Christian Associations, in "going out into the streets and lanes of the city, to bring in the poor and the maimed, the halt and the blind," or out into "the highways and hedges to compel them to come in" (Luke 14:21, 23). There is still much room for charity work and social reform, for rescue missions, for promoting civic righteousness and fighting intemperance and vice, without however assuming to do the work of the state, and without forgetting that the specific function of the Church is to proclaim the Gospel of Christ.

There remains also much work yet to be done in the *foreign mission* field. The Church of Christ begins to realize more and more the duty and the privilege of taking part in carrying out the Saviour's injunction: "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations." An active interest in foreign mission work is the best test of the

vitality of the Church. Not by angels, but by men is the world to be converted to Christ. Gratefulness for the light and life received, heartfelt pity for fellow-men who are suffering under the ban of superstition, cruelty and vice, an earnest desire to help in giving to as many men as possible a personal share in Christ's salvation, these are the sufficient motives for carrying on the foreign mission work with zeal and devotion; and the home Churches themselves are greatly benefited by such work. Doors are opening everywhere; men and means are needed to enter in and to win the world for Christ.

3. *The Union Spirit.*

In the next place, a Church deserves higher praise in proportion to its standing on the broad platform of the Church universal, endeavoring to keep the *bond of peace* with all those who love the Lord in sincerity, and confessing itself to be but a part of the "holy catholic Church," which is the communion of saints. It cannot be right and in accord with the spirit of Christ, to build up the walls of partition between Churches so high as to exclude as unorthodox or sectarian all other denominations but one's own. Loyalty to the individual Church does not conflict with the higher duty of promoting Christian unity, in accordance with the highpriestly prayer of Christ: "I pray for them also that believe on me through their word; that they may all be one" (John 17:20).

Such union in the spirit does *not* mean *uniformity* of ritual, Church government or doctrine, not a merging of all the Churches or an abolishing of denominational distinctions. We cannot advocate an indiscriminate unification or a conformity of denominations, which would efface all churchly individuality. "*In necessariis unitas, in non necessariis libertas, in utrisque caritas*" (In essentials unity, in non-essentials liberty, in both charity), is a good old motto. It finds its practical demonstration in the establishment and maintenance of fraternal relations, of church comity and

of a "*federation of Churches*" which will enable them to combine their strength in the battle against sin and unbelief, and to labor more effectively for the conversion of the world. The nearer the Churches come to Christ, the nearer they will come to each other and the more closely will they realize the ideal of the future, "one flock and one shepherd."

4. *Variety of Ritual.*

In the matter of ritual and worship, there can and should be a great variety of forms according to the needs of the age and the religious training of the people. Liturgical forms and ceremonies, vestments and art, especially music, may play an important part in the public worship and in the expression and cultivation of true devotion. No one form of worship can be made binding for all times or for all kinds of people.

But the ritual should be *adapted* to the spiritual needs of all the members of the Church, so that provision is made not only for the "fathers in Christ," but likewise for the beginners in discipleship, and for those who are yet strangers to the household of God. Accordingly, no Church should have *one exclusive* form of service, whether it be the preaching service or the liturgical worship. The preaching of the Gospel, doubtless, remains a very important feature of united worship, both for the sake of the unconverted and for the needful continued instruction and quickening of believers. But preaching alone does not satisfy nor suffice. A variety of devotional exercises, including an active participation of the congregation in the service, by singing, prayer or testimony, will prove most effective in upbuilding the Church.

5. *Church Government.*

That Christ is the head of the Church universal and the king of the kingdom of grace which he came to establish on earth, is a truth recognized more or less clearly by every Christian denomination. This fundamental principle of

church authority being clearly recognized, a *variety of forms* of government and of church organization must be regarded as permissible. We know that Christ appointed certain disciples to be apostles (or missionaries) and these, in turn, appointed or ordained elders, bishops (overseers) and deacons, to direct and to manage the affairs of the Church. (Acts 14:23, "And when they had appointed from them elders in every Church and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord." Titus 1:5, 7, "For this cause left I thee in Crete that thou shouldest set in order the things that were wanting and appoint elders in every city, as I gave thee charge. For the bishop must be blameless, as God's steward; not self-willed, not soon angry," etc.) Order is indispensable, where the object of the kingdom of God on earth is to be attained and order cannot be maintained without authority; but extremes should be avoided in too much or too little government.

The Roman Church demands the universal acceptance of the pope as the successor of Peter and vice-gerent of Christ, whose decisions "*ex cathedra*" are infallible in matters of doctrine and ritual. But this claim rests on a spurious commission of authority, as entrusted exclusively to Peter (compare Matth. 16:19 with 18:18) and transferred to self-appointed successors. However, some Christians may prefer to recognize the pope as the supreme earthly ruler of the Church. Others prefer an episcopal government, others a presbyterian, still others a congregational rule of democratic independence. The testimony of experience appears to prove that a *confidential* government, whether by the hands of bishops, by a presbytery or by an executive board, appointed by Synod, offers the greatest advantages, with the fewest dangers.

If this is true of the entire Church, it applies also to each congregation. It must be regarded as an exigency, if the pastor or rector alone is the spiritual head of a church. Theological training and churchly ordination are indeed necessary for the proper superintending of the affairs of a

congregation, especially in matters of doctrine and in the administration of the sacraments, but the minister must have the assistance and support of representatives of the congregation, if his work is to be truly successful.

6. *Discipline.*

The welfare of the Church, finally, requires the proper exercise of discipline, in the broadest sense of the word. This includes, in the first place, the adoption of rules and regulations for the *admission* or *exclusion* of members and for the general conduct of church affairs. While every member of the church must be allowed the right to withdraw from church-fellowship, without thereby losing any civil or social rights, the Church must also have the right to dismiss or to exclude those who do not fulfill their duties as church members, or who forfeit their membership by gross sins. For the exercise of that negative church discipline, the Bible and the apostolic age give but a few general directions. Private offences are to be dealt with according to the rule in Matth. 18:15-17 and James 5:19,20; for *public* offences directions are found in I Cor. 5:3-5; I Thess. 5:14 and II Thess. 3:6.

It is a matter of deep regret that the abuse of the so-called "power of the keys" in the Confessional and the Inquisition has brought Church discipline into disrepute and has made it an object of suspicion and hatred to many. In order to be effective, the exercise of Church discipline must be *supported* by the religious spirit and life of the Church. Whatever savors of priestly lordship must be avoided. The Church can only make use of moral means in administering discipline and with nothing else in view, than the removal of offences, the reformation or conversion of the offender and the quickening of the spiritual life of the Church.

CHAPTER XL. THE ORDINANCES OF THE CHURCH.

1. *Means of Grace.*

The term “means of grace” is used in the Church both in a broader and in a narrower sense. In its largest sense it includes every thing which God in Christ has given us for the quickening and strengthening of spiritual life. In this sense, *prayer* is the greatest means of grace. In a narrower sense, however, we understand by it institutions and ordinances of a public character which are offered through the *mediation* of the *Church* for the promotion of the life of its members. These means of grace, therefore, are divine in their origin, but human in their application. The gift is substantially the same in all cases, viz., the grace of God, but the form or vessel in which the gift is presented, varies. The ordinances of the Church are made means of grace by the Holy Spirit. The principal agencies to be considered under this head are: 1. Christian *fellowship*, especially as exercised in united worship. 2. The *word* of God, as publicly proclaimed or privately read and studied. 3. The ordinance of *Baptism*. 4. The *Holy Communion*.

2. *Christian Fellowship and the Word of God.*

The communion of faith which exists among believers becomes a means of grace, through the opportunities afforded by the Church for Christian fellowship and mutual edification. In the first place, we have the *united worship*, especially on the Lord’s day, but also on other occasions. All organizations which are formed for the purpose of promoting Christian fellowship, for advancing godliness and for united effort in the upbuilding of the Church of Christ and the kingdom of God, may be classed as such means of grace mediated by the Church. A concrete symbol of the benefits of such Christian fellowship introduced by the apostolic Church and perpetuated in several denominations is the so-called “*Love-Feast*” or Agape.

The *Word of God* as supplied by the Church is, first of all,

the printed Bible, which is put into the hands of the members of the Church for their personal use. And certainly, the prayerful study of the sacred volume as the standard of the Christian faith and practice is a most important means of grace. The holy Scriptures, furthermore, as publicly preached and applied, are a most valuable agency for Christian instruction and aid. The conversion of sinners and the spiritual growth of believers are closely bound up with the effectual preaching of the Gospel. But the ministry of the Word is not confined to those who have been formally set apart by ordination to the service of the Church. Their testimony must be supplemented by the mutual instruction and edification of lay members, in Bible study and in the teaching of the Sunday School.

3. *The Sacraments.*

In a special sense the two ordinances, known as Sacraments, constitute means of grace offered by the Church. The word sacrament is taken from the Vulgate translation of the Greek word *μυστήριον* (mystery, or revealed secret) in Eph. 1:9 and Col. 1:27. Accordingly, in the early Church, it was applied to various sacred rites as well as to certain doctrines, like the Trinity and the incarnation of Christ. Later, however, its meaning became limited. Augustine defined a sacrament thus: "*Accedit verbum ad elementum et fit sacramentum*" (word and element—make a sacrament) and Peter Lombard: "*Sacra est invisibilis gratiae visibilis forma*" (a sacred visible form of an invisible grace). The "scholastics" then fixed the number of sacraments at *seven* and the Roman Catholic Church still so counts them, viz.: 1. Baptism. 2. Eucharist. 3. Confirmation, as based on Acts 8:17. 4. Confession or Penance (James 5:16). 5. Holy Orders or Ordination (Acts 13:2, 3). 6. Matrimony (Eph. 5:32). 7. Extreme Unction (James 5:14).

The Protestant Churches count the first and second only and for the following reasons: Two of the seven, viz., *con-*

firmation and *extreme unction*, can hardly be shown to be meant in the passages of Scripture quoted with them. According to the generally received interpretation, Acts 8:17 tells about a special conferring of power of the Holy Spirit upon certain Christians at Samaria, and James 5:14 refers to an anointing of the sick with oil for their restoration to health and not in preparation for death. Two other Catholic sacraments, viz., *ordination* and *matrimony*, are not appointed for all men, in fact are made to exclude each other. Consequently they are not means of grace intended for all, if they are to be considered such at all. The fourth Roman sacrament, *Confession* or *Penance*, has no material element accompanying it, unless the imposition of hands be so regarded. If the word sacrament is to be understood in the broad sense of a Church ordinance, other rites like love-feast, foot-washing, and the like, might be counted in also.

Hence the Protestant Churches limit the meaning of sacrament to a holy ordinance instituted by Christ himself, wherein the blessings of the Gospel are pledged by visible signs. Thus *three things* make a sacrament: *a. Christ's institution.* *b. A promise* of a blessing. *c. A visible element.* Baptism and the Lord's Supper were instituted by Christ and were regarded as permanent ordinances by the apostles. (See Matth. 28:19—Acts 2:38, and Matth. 26:26-28—I Cor. 11:26.) Both have a definite promise accompanying the rite (Mark 16:16; Titus 3:5; I Cor. 10:16), and both have a visible element as a tangible pledge of divine grace. Furthermore these two sacraments take the place of the two sacred rites of Israel, circumcision and passover, the former the initiatory rite of consecration and the sign of reception into the covenant of God, the latter the memorial of the deliverance from bondage and death by the blood of the Lamb.

Some Christian denominations hold *foot-washing* to be a third sacrament and an ordinance of binding obligation. It is true, that the three tests of the sacrament generally accepted by Protestants seem to apply also to this rite, viz.,

Instituted by Christ, a promise and a visible element. (Compare John 13:8, 14.) But we may doubt, whether the words of Christ: "Ye also ought to wash one another's feet," were intended to make it a permanent rite. The Epistles, while mentioning foot-washing (I Tim. 5:10), do not speak of it as an established ordinance. Doubtless, the underlying principle of humility and service is of lasting obligation, but a literal observance seems out of place in countries where the people do not walk barefooted, as they did in Palestine. Moreover, as a sacrament of daily remission of sin, foot-washing would be but a repetition of the Holy Communion, which includes this idea as well as that of mutual affection among God's children.

4. *Difference between Word and Sacrament.*

As to the relation between the Word and the Sacrament and the difference between them, opposite views are represented by the Roman Catholics on the one side and Zwingli and his followers on the other side. The former hold that the ordinance as such, as an outward act, is the divinely appointed *means* for the *impartation* of a mystic grace, not to be obtained in any other way. The latter regard them simply as visible *signs* of the saving truth of the Gospel, memorials of Christ's redemption and a public confession of faith, and becoming effective for salvation only through an intelligent apprehension of the truth, but not conveying any gift or grace, additional to the benefit derived from the Word of God. Scripture teaching and Christian experience support a *middle view*, viz.: There is no essential difference between the gift or grace conveyed by the Word and by the Sacrament, but a difference in the mode and degree of conveying it; the Sacrament by being a memorial and seal of Christ's redeeming work, becomes a real *means*, by which that redemption is applied. The difference between Word and Sacrament may be defined in the following four points:

a. The sacrament, as Augustine said, is the "*visible word*." The element supports our faith by appealing to

the senses. It furnishes a tangible pledge of the divine offer of salvation by a corporeal contact with the Word. *b.* While the grace of God as bestowed through the Word is mediated by the intellectual process of human thinking the gift in the Sacrament comes in a more direct and concrete form by act and sentiment, as the message of complete redemption. *c.* In the Sacrament the offer of divine salvation is more *individualized* than in the word of preaching. The promise and assurance given are special and direct to the individual ("take, eat; *this* is my body"). *d.* The combining of a material element with the spiritual gift has a *prophetic* significance. It testifies, that the physical nature of man also shall share in the future glory of the redeemed spirit.

5. *What is Essential to the Sacrament?*

The apostles, as we learn from Acts 10:48 and I Cor. 1:17, did not generally administer the sacrament of baptism themselves, but left this to others. It would appear, therefore, that the blessing of the sacrament does not depend upon the *person* who officiates. While it is eminently proper, that these holy ordinances should be administered by men duly set apart and ordained for the ministry, their efficacy is not conditioned upon the spirituality of the man who officiates. However, the Sacraments should be administered according to Christ's command, in using the words, the elements and the mode of performing the rite as directed in the New Testament.

a. The *words* of institution must be pronounced substantially as given by Christ, though no particular importance attaches to the letter; for the Bible record itself differs as to the exact wording. Compare Paul's version of the Institution of the Lord's supper, in I Cor. 11:24-26, with Christ's words, as given in Matth. 26:26-28; and the apostolic procedure in Acts 2:28 and 10:48 in baptizing "in the name of Jesus Christ," with "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost," in Matth. 28:19.

b. The *elements* used must be in accordance with the Lord's directing. But here again the spirit of Scripture and the example of the early Church warrant the belief that the intention of complying with Christ's command is of more importance than conformity in detail. The efficacy of the Sacrament does not appear to depend upon the kind of bread or of wine that is used in the Holy Communion, whether it be leavened or unleavened bread or a wafer, whether it be fermented or unfermented wine. Likewise, it matters not, what kind of water is used in Baptism, whether warm or cold, running or stagnant, whether much water or little water.

c. The *mode of administering* the sacrament should be guided by the same principle of carrying out the Lord's direction, without feeling bound to any one particular form. It cannot make an essential difference, whether the bread be received with the hand or the lips and while the communicant is standing or kneeling; whether the water is poured or sprinkled upon the candidate or whether he is immersed in the water forward or backward, as long as there is an earnest desire to fulfill the will of Christ, as we understand it and as circumstances may seem to require.

6. *The Necessity of the Sacrament.*

The foregoing considerations may suggest the question, whether the elements are at all necessary, and whether the Sacraments as such are indispensable for salvation. The Society of Friends deny this doctrinally and many other Christians practically, by not taking the Sacraments.

The *relative necessity* of the Sacraments will appear from the following considerations: a. No believer has a right to set aside as unimportant a *divine ordinance* because of assumed spiritual superiority. If Christ directed his disciples to baptize all who want to be saved and if he enjoined upon all his followers to commemorate his death in the rite of the Holy Communion, no man may say that it is unnecessary to obey his explicit command. b. No believer is so

strong in the faith as to be able or desirous to *dispense* with the visible and tangible pledges which are given expressly in support of human weakness.

On the other hand we do not ascribe to the Sacraments such unique efficacy as to make them absolutely indispensable to salvation. The Apostle Peter does not mention the Sacrament of the Lord's supper in his epistles and John does not refer to either of the Sacraments by name. The early Church fathers declared the baptism of blood, which those received who died as Christian confessors, before they were baptized, as an equivalent. On the same principle, the baptism of tears shed by a penitent sinner may be considered an equivalent for the Sacrament, when the latter is impossible. Augustine referring to cases, where the enjoyment of the Holy Communion was precluded said: *Crede et manducasti* (Believe and you have eaten). Christ's disciples may all have been baptized with the baptism of John, but they did not receive the Christian baptism. We conclude, therefore, that the Sacraments have the necessity of *precept* or divine ordination, but that the benefits which they convey are not bound up with them in such a manner, that they cannot be secured in any other way. Compare Mark 16:16, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned," not, "he that is not *baptized*."

CHAPTER XLI. BAPTISM.

1. *The Meaning of the Word.*

The Baptists and related denominations generally hold, that the word "baptism" means nothing else but *dipping* or immersion, but according to the understanding of other Christians it means an application of water, a *washing*, irrespective of the mode of procedure. In classic usage βάπτω and βαπτίζω certainly mean "to dip," but they also

denote to dye, to cover with water and to wash; men are said to be "baptized" (overwhelmed) with debts, with puzzling questions, showing that the effect rather than the process is expressed. In the Septuagint translation of Dan. 4:30 we meet the word in the sense of Nebukadnezzar's body being *wet* with the *dew* of heaven, and in Mark 7:4 we read, that the Jews when coming from the market, do not eat, "except they wash themselves" (βαπτίζονται). In Acts 2:41 it is recorded that 3000 persons were baptized in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, although there is no running stream in summer time in or near the city for immersing people. The "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles," which dates from the first half of the second century, has this direction: If thou hast neither (living water nor standing water in sufficient quantity), pour water on the head three times, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost." Add to this, that where the element is mentioned in the New Testament we find "baptized *with* water or *in* water and in the Holy Spirit (Luke 3:16; Acts 1:5; John 1:26), not *into*, except once "into the Jordan." In the baptismal formula of Matth. 28:19, "baptizing them into the name," a "binding or consecrating *unto* the name," rather than a dipping into is evidently intended.

These facts show that, although doubtless immersion was the most frequent and in some respects the most expressive mode of baptism, it was *not* the *exclusive* form and it is not the only possible Christian baptism. So far as the Sacrament symbolizes a dying and "being buried with Christ through baptism" (Rom. 6:4), this idea evidently is best expressed by immersion. On the other hand, the "washing of regeneration" (Tit. 3:5) and the "having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our body washed with pure water" (Heb. 10:22) will be better typified by pouring or sprinkling.

The real value of the Sacrament as symbolical of the *cleansing* of the soul cannot depend upon the quantity of water that is used, or the manner of its *application*. Im-

mersion in an ocean of water cannot make a black man white nor a sinner clean, but one drop of the blood of Christ cleanses the soul from all sin. Since the rite of baptism is designed for all climes of the earth and for all classes of men and immersion would be fatal to some and impossible to others, we conclude that in administering this rite such application of water is required as will make the act sufficiently typical of the cleansing of the heart.

2. *Origin of the Rite.*

Christian baptism has its *historic ground* in the command which Christ gave before his ascension to heaven, Matth. 28:18-20. The rite as such is older. Christian baptism was preceded by the baptism of John which, in turn, can be traced further back to the ablutions prescribed in the Mosaic law, for the cleansing of body and soul. In the last instance, the ordinance is founded on the general sentiment of mankind, that an outward cleansing of the body is emblematic, if not a part of the cleansing of the soul. Lustrations of one kind or another have been used at all times, also by heathen nations. The Christian sacrament differs from other rites of ablution mainly in this respect, that it pledges to the candidate a share in Christ's salvation and connects him with the person and work of the Redeemer. When Christians are baptized in or rather unto the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, this means in the first place, that they confess *belief* in the revelation of the triune God and willingness to *consecrate* themselves to his service. In virtue of this willingness the candidates are received into the fellowship of the Christian Church.

3. *Significance of the Rite.*

So far all Christians agree, as to the significance of this rite; but not on the more important question, in what sense the Sacrament pledges *admission* to the *invisible Church* or the kingdom of God. The Church of Rome teaches, that baptism is equivalent to *regeneration*, the Sacrament by

which salvation is imparted to the candidate. The Baptists and others hold that *regeneration* must *precede* baptism, the Sacrament being simply the sign of the salvation received and a confession of faith. Most Protestant Churches take a *middle* view, which neither identifies baptism and regeneration, nor sunders them, but makes the Sacrament the divinely appointed *sign* and *pledge* of *admission* to the covenant relation with God in Christ Jesus. Peter, in Acts 2:38, adds to the admonition: "Repent ye and be baptized," the distinct promise, "unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" and quotes our Lord as saying: "Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost" (Acts 11:16). Paul declares, in Gal. 3:27, "As many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ."

On the ground of these and similar teachings of the New Testament, we find the significance of Baptism in the following points: *a.* Baptism is a *sign* typifying that the candidate, "baptized unto Christ," is set apart from an unbelieving world for Christ and is cleansed from the guilt of sin by the washing of the blood of Christ. *b.* Baptism is a *pledge* of the promise of salvation. Our Lord instituted this ordinance after the work of redemption had been accomplished, for the evident purpose of offering a tangible seal of this salvation, as applied to each individual.

c. Baptism is a *medium* of salvation, a means of grace, by which the salvation thus signified and pledged is actually conveyed to the candidate.

In Acts 10:44 we read that the Holy Spirit was given to some Christian converts before they were baptized and in Acts 8:16 the opposite, viz., that an additional laying on of hands was needed to impart the power of the Spirit to baptized Christians. How much of divine grace, therefore, precedes the sacrament, how much goes with the administering of the rite, and how much is left for later time, cannot be determined by a general rule.

4. *Conditions for Baptism.*

The question, who are the proper *candidates* for baptism, must be decided by the design of the ordinance and the example of the early Christian Church. In Acts 8:37, the Evangelist Philip says to the Ethiopian: "If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest (be baptized) and he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God," and in Mk. 16:16, we read: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." It is true, that both these declarations are wanting in the oldest Greek manuscripts of the New Testament and may be later additions. But they certainly express the fact, that in the apostolic Church a confession of *faith in Christ*, as the Saviour from sin, was required of the candidates for baptism. Such a confession presupposes a preparatory *instruction* in the truths of the gospel and a corresponding evidence of an earnest *desire* to be delivered from the guilt and power of sin. It is not in accord with this principle to baptize the heathen in crowds, with the idea that the administering of the sacrament will make them Christians, as has been done now and then.

On the other hand, it does not appear necessary to wait with the rite until the candidate has proved the genuineness of his conversion by a *Christian life*. If the sacrament of baptism, as we understand it, marks the establishment of the covenant relation between Christ and the believer and the *beginning* of spiritual life, its proper place is at the commencement of the new life, not in the middle or at the close.

All additional ceremonies and *ecclesiastical usages*, which have been introduced in certain Churches, such as anointing with holy oil, dressing the candidates in white robes, abjuring the service of the devil, changing the *name*, may be valuable accessories, but are not essential to the sacrament.

CHAPTER XLII. INFANT BAPTISM.

1. *Antiquity of the Rite.*

The great body of Christian denominations, viz., the Greek and the Roman Churches, as well as most Protestant Churches, administer the rite of baptism to *infants* as well as to adults. This custom can be traced back with certainty only to the year 200 A.D., when Tertullian speaks of it as being in vogue in his day, but himself disapproves of it. His younger contemporary, Origen, declares, that it had been practiced since the days of the apostles.

As to the testimony of Scripture, it should be admitted that infant baptism is nowhere expressly commanded; but the following declarations should be noted: *a.* The words of institution of the sacrament in Matth. 28:19 read: "Make disciples of all the nations, *baptizing* them (or "having baptized" — βαπτίζαντες) in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things, etc." Here baptism is placed *first* and teaching second. *b.* The command to make disciples of *nations* naturally would include the *children* and as the Old Testament covenant rite of circumcision was performed on children, the Jews, when becoming Christians, would naturally present their children also for the new covenant rite of baptism, especially after Peter's declaration in Acts 2:38, 39, "Repent ye and be baptized every one of you. . . For to you is the promise and to your *children*." *c.* In Acts 16:15 we read of Lydia that "she was baptized and her *house*," and in I Cor. 1:16 Paul records that he "baptized the house of Stephanas," which may be presumed to have included children.

However, the children are nowhere directly mentioned and the question as to their standing, probably, did not arise until a Christian community had been established.

2. *Various Reasons for Infant Baptism.*

Several Christian denominations disapprove of or denounce Infant baptism (“pedobaptism”) as an abuse of the sacrament, a remnant of popery and a violation of the divine command. Those who practice it do so on different grounds, largely because of much vagueness or uncertainty as to the true significance of the sacrament in general.

a. Many look upon infant baptism simply as a time-honored ceremony and a *churchly rite*, by which the infant is admitted to the fellowship of the visible church and to membership in the Christian community. But in that case it would be no sacrament at all, like adult baptism.

b. Some who believe in infant baptism as a true sacrament, hold that it belongs to children as a part of their *Christian inheritance*. As baptism has taken the place of the Old Testament rite of circumcision, the children of Christian parents are received into the covenant of God, in virtue of their parentage.

c. If faith is a necessary requisite for baptism, many say, that infant baptism rests on the *vicarious faith* of parents or sponsors, as in the healing of the nobleman’s son at Capernaum (John 4:50), the Syrophenician woman (Matt. 15:28), and the man sick of the palsy (Mark 2:5). But the two first instances refer to bodily healing and the third in the words: “seeing their faith” doubtless includes the faith of the sick man himself.

d. Some claim that the child receives the sacrament in virtue of its own *spiritual fitness*, because it was said of John the Baptist, that “he shall be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother’s womb” (Luke 4:15). But while the Holy Spirit’s influence may begin with the very first germ of individual existence, it can certainly not be shown that an infant has conscious faith.

The reasons thus given contain a partial truth and when combined with each other carry some weight, but they may be said to lack the right starting point of the argument.

which is found in *Christ's invitation*: "Suffer the little children and forbid them not to come unto me; for to such belongeth the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:14), and in the right understanding of the meaning of infant baptism.

3. *The Meaning of Infant Baptism.*

What is true of the sacrament of baptism in general, must apply also to infant baptism, viz., that it is *not regeneration*, not equivalent to personal salvation, nor on the other hand is it simply a *church rite* admitting to the membership of the visible Church. But it is the symbol and *seal* of the *objective redemption* accomplished by Christ and also the *means of grace*, by Christ's appointment, for conveying the benefits of this redemption so far as that can be done objectively, without taking away the right and duty of personal self-determination. Hence baptism, objectively speaking, marks the *beginning* of personal salvation through the application of the merits of Christ's redemption. This objective offer of saving grace includes *two things*, viz., acquittal from the guilt of sin or justification, and the implanting of the divine life or regeneration. Can an infant receive these?

a. As to the former, we know that every child, as "flesh born of the flesh" has its unavoidable share of *inherited depravity* and a corresponding share in the displeasure of God against all defilement of sin, as Paul writes, "we were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest" (Eph. 2:3). Accordingly, aside of any personal sin, the child needs the sprinkling of the blood of Christ, for a cleansing of the heart (compare Ps. 51:5, 7). Thus the infant as such is a *proper subject* for the manifestation of the grace of God. As the *sin* of Adam is objectively transmitted to every child because it cannot resist, so the *saving grace* of Christ, so far as it means an objective offer of acquittal from sin, can be transmitted to every Christian child, of whom the apostle writes in I Cor. 7:14, "Your children are *holy*, i.e., set apart for the kingdom of heaven.

This promise and pledge then of an objective share in Christ's redemption is the first thing which the sacrament of infant baptism expresses.

b. As to the other aspect of personal salvation, the *infusion* of the divine life or regeneration, we again know that all spiritual life comes to man as a *gift* of the Holy Spirit. It is not man who regenerates himself and quickens his heart. The sinner cannot even repent or believe by his own strength. "It is God who worketh in us both to will and to do." All that is required of man, is that he renounce his natural enmity and pride, and accept the divine life which is given. The child, though it feels as yet no longing for salvation, at least offers *no resistance*. It was doubtless partly for this reason, that the Saviour commanded the little children to be brought to him that he might bless them and said, "To such belongeth the *kingdom of heaven*" and "Except ye turn, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 18:3).

It is true that Christ did not directly command that children should be baptized. But if to such (even to infants and "babes," Luke 18:15) belongeth the kingdom of heaven, why should they be denied the sacrament which Christ ordained to be the sign and pledge of admission to that kingdom? If infants are excluded from this rite because they have no conscious faith, they are to the same extent debarred from the kingdom of heaven, because "without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing to God." It is the same Jesus who said: "Except a man be born anew he cannot see the kingdom of God" and who speaking of little children declared, "To such belongeth the kingdom."

The fact that many who were baptized in infancy, afterwards show no signs of spiritual life, merely proves that the sacrament does not work mechanically, but that baptismal grace is *conditional* in infants, as well as in adults. While

the child is too young to know the meaning of the ordinance, it is not too young to *be set apart* for Christ and his kingdom, nor too young to be received into that *Christian fellowship*, which pledges to the child the blessings of the Church and a "nurturing in the chastening and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4). Unquestionably such merely objective dispensation of divine grace must be followed later by a personal appropriation of this grace, in the exercise of conscious faith. But even with adults, the real permanent blessing of the sacrament is altogether conditioned upon a faithful abiding in the fellowship of the Lord.

4. *Reasons for Preferring Infant Baptism.*

The foregoing arguments would prove only, that the sacrament of baptism *may* also be administered to infants. It remains for us to give reasons why the great majority of Christians *prefer* infant baptism to waiting until the children have come to a mature age. *Three* such reasons may be stated:

a. The desire of Christian parents to *secure* to their children as early as possible the *objective sign* and pledge of their share in the blessings of redemption. This is a part of the loving provision which parents make for their children, such as gifts and preparations intended mainly for future use. They consecrate their children to the triune God, praying for their salvation, and they are resolved, by word and example, to lead them to the Saviour, as soon as there is the first sign of an awakening consciousness, so that the spiritual life may be implanted and may grow in them, simultaneously with the natural life.

b. As the sacrament of baptism marks the *beginning* of a Christian life, no time in later years seems better or even as well suited for receiving this *initiatory* rite, than the earliest infancy. For the work of the Holy Spirit manifests itself even in infants. Children do begin to love the Saviour, as well as they love their parents; they learn to pray to him and to feel the need of divine help; in short,

they make an experience of divine grace, in proportion to their understanding. If in later years the sense of guilt is clearer and faith as a personal possession is more definite, the power of sin, on the other hand, likewise has become greater than it was in infancy.

c. As regards the visible *results* of the sacrament, the Churches which administer infant baptism can claim at least so much, that persons who are baptized in infancy and afterward brought up in Christian training, are not in any way behind the members of Churches which baptize adults only, in Christian graces, and that the most faithful and efficient servants of Christ, throughout many centuries of the Christian era, have been baptized in infancy.

5. *Whose Children are to be Baptized?*

It should be understood, however, that infant baptism is a *privilege* and a sacred trust granted to church members and it must be guarded against abuse. Unfortunately, the sacred ordinance too often is degraded into a meaningless ceremony, or else into a superstitious *opus operatum* (magical performance). The Baptists are perfectly right in their protest against an indifferent formalism, as well as an unwarranted sacramentarianism. The administering of infant baptism is in place only, where there is a reasonable hope that the sacrament will actually mark the beginning of Christian discipleship and that the operation of the Holy Spirit will have a free course in the heart of the child.

Hence infant baptism is out of place, where there is *no prospect* whatever of the child receiving such a Christian training, that is among the children of heathen or where parents and relatives are outspoken *unbelievers*, and where the Church also cannot exercise any influence, through the Sunday School and otherwise. The rite is out of place, where it is merely asked for on superstitious grounds. Ministers and Church officers should take pains to explain the true meaning of the sacrament, where this is not properly apprehended and should impress upon parents

and relatives the *obligation* which the rite imposes upon them, to bring up the child for Christ and the Church.

6. *The Rite of Confirmation.*

“Confirmation” was not instituted by Christ, but is a solemn rite of the Church, originating in the early custom of anointing the forehead of young persons and pronouncing the blessing of the Lord upon them, *preparatory* to their first partaking of the Lord’s supper. Hence in the Churches which observe this rite, it connects, as it were, the first sacrament with the second, by making the confirmands *communicant* members of the Church. Confirmation does not objectively complete the sacrament of infant baptism. However, the covenant between the child and the Redeemer which in baptism is objectively declared on the part of God, receives its subjective ratification, when the confirmand publicly confesses his belief in Christ and his salvation, as well as his desire to be a disciple of Christ. Such a personal *ratification* of the baptismal covenant may and should take place before the rite of confirmation is administered.

The latter is but a *public declaration* of Christian faith, on the strength of which the candidate is then admitted to the Holy Communion and to full *membership* in the church. However, as confirmation is generally preceded by careful instruction in Christian doctrine, by prayer with and for the confirmands and by spiritual admonition, this rite becomes an occasion for renewing and strengthening the covenant of grace and for imparting to the confirmand a new and special blessing from the Lord. (Matt. 10:32; I Tim. 6:12.)

CHAPTER XLIII. THE HOLY COMMUNION.

1. *The Institution of the Rite.*

We have in the New Testament *four* accounts of the institution of this holy ordinance, three of them in the historical records of the three synoptical gospels and the fourth in Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians as given him by special revelation. (Matt. 26; Mark 14; Luke 22; I Cor. 11.) They all agree in stating that the Holy Communion, also called the Lord's Supper, was instituted by Christ at the close of the last *passover* meal which he celebrated with his disciples, in the night before his death. The ancient Jewish rite of the *passover* was fulfilled, when the true paschal lamb, Christ, was offered for the redemption of the world.

Four points appear prominent in the institution of the rite: *a.* By making the broken bread and the poured out wine the emblems of his own body and blood Christ, in the first place, emphasized the *certainly* of his impending death. *b.* In the next place, he presented this death in the most comforting light as the source of permanent *blessing* to the disciples ("given for you, . . . poured for many unto remission of sins"). *c.* By saying: "Do this in remembrance of me" he made this ordinance a permanent *memorial* of his dying love for them. The death of the Master, instead of separating him from the disciples, should bind them more closely to him in a covenant of love. *d.* It should also *bind them together* with one another in a holy fellowship of spiritual communion.

That the apostles and early Christians so understood the ordinance and regarded it as an integral part of Christian worship, appears from Acts 2:46 and 20:7 and I Cor. 11:23. In apostolic times it was called "the breaking of bread," because it was observed at the close of a meal, and also the Eucharist (*i.e.*, thanksgiving). Later the names "offer-

ing'' and ''*sacrifice*'' were introduced, gradually assuming the meaning of the sacrament being a repetition of the sacrifice brought by Christ. Hence the term *hostia* (victim), or host, for the consecrated bread. As it was customary to celebrate the sacred rite, after the promiscuous assembly of worshippers had been dismissed, with the words: ''*Missa est*,'' the celebration of the sacrament has also received the name of the ''*Mass*.''

2. *The Observance of the Rite.*

The commandment of Christ and the order of the Church prescribe the use of the *elements*, as instituted by our Lord, viz., bread and wine. In the eleventh century a controversy arose between the Greek and the Latin Churches on the question what *kind of bread* should be used, the Latin Church holding, that it must be unleavened bread or a wafer, because the rite was instituted on the evening of the passover, when all leaven was removed from every Jewish household, while the Greek Church claimed, that Christ ate the passover and instituted the sacrament on the evening before the passover, and that he died, when the passover lambs were killed. The *wine* ordinarily used in the Holy Communion, both in the Eastern and Western Churches, has been the fermented juice of the grape, as most likely used at the institution of the rite, although it is claimed by some, that the passover wine was unfermented. The latter is now preferred by many Christians. Neither the one nor the other should be regarded as essential to the validity of the ordinance.

The most prominent *features* in the celebration of the sacraments are the following: *a.* The *consecrating prayer*. Its object is to prepare the hearts of the communicants for the sacrament, to confess the need of Christ's salvation, to thank him for the gift of grace and to invoke the divine blessing upon the celebration. *b.* The *pronouncing* of the *words of institution*, the breaking of the bread and the pouring of the wine. As the bread represents the broken

body of Christ and the wine the poured out life blood of the Saviour, these features seem to be important enough not to be lightly omitted. *c. The partaking of the elements.* This may be done simultaneously or successively. But the commandment of Christ is not obeyed, when the priest alone regularly partakes of the bread and the wine, or when the cup is withheld from the laity altogether, on the pretext that the body contains the blood and that there is danger of profaning the blood of Christ, by spilling any of the wine.

3. *The Controversy Regarding the "Body and Blood."*

a. The Ancient Church. In the early Church, apparently, no explanation as to the relation between the elements and the person of Christ was attempted. Justin Martyr and Irenaeus (about 150 A.D.) first began to write about the sacrament as a repetition of the atoning death of Christ. That idea having gradually prevailed, Bishop Gregory, of Rome (A. D. 600), who first formally assumed the title of pope, sanctioned it by declaring that the celebration of the Mass meant a *daily repetition* of the expiatory sacrifice of the Redeemer. About the same time the theory was advanced that, by the consecration of the elements, bread and wine were actually changed into the flesh and blood of Christ.

b. The Middle Ages. However, five centuries passed, before Hildebert of Tours (+1134) coined the word *Transubstantiation* and another century, before a Church Council held in Rome in A.D. 1215, under Pope Innocence III, gave the official sanction to the new doctrine by deciding that, by the act of consecration, bread and wine *become flesh and blood* of Christ ("*Corpus Christi*"), though color, taste and shape remain. Then also the custom became general to withdraw the cup from the laity, and this practice was formally sanctioned at the council of Constance (A.D. 1415), which condemned Hus and his followers as heretics.

c. The Reformers. The *Unitas Fratrum* in Bohemia and

Moravia from its beginning (A.D. 1457) rejected the doctrine of transubstantiation and held to the view afterwards adopted by Luther, that we partake of the spiritual body of Christ. Later the Brethren inclined more to the teachings of Calvin and eventually expressed themselves as most in accord with *Melanchthon*, in emphasizing the *personal presence* of Christ in the sacrament, without trying to define the connection between the Saviour and the sacramental elements. *Luther*, while rejecting the Roman doctrine of transubstantiation, yet held to a literal understanding of the words, "This *is* my body" as requiring a substantial presence of the glorified body of Christ in and with the visible elements. Accordingly his followers teach the real, sacramental presence of the *body* of the God-man in the Holy Communion, so that when the bread and wine are received naturally, the body and blood of Christ are received by a supernatural eating and drinking.

The Swiss Reformers were more radical in their view. *Zwingli* in particular held, that the glorified body of Christ being in *heaven*, cannot enter into the sacrament, either directly or indirectly. The design of the ordinance is simply that of a *memorial* and an act of confession. Bread and wine are emblems of the work of redemption and nothing else.

The discarding of all the mysterious or miraculous features of the sacrament not being satisfactory to many Protestants, *Calvin* endeavored to meet the want by declaring that there is something *special* in the sacramental gift. The believer in partaking of the elements, by faith is *lifted up* to the presence of the glorified Redeemer in heaven and a supernatural power proceeds from the God-man, like the rays which emanate from the sun. *Melanchthon*, *Luther's* assistant in the German Reformation, also occupied a *middle ground* between *Luther* and *Zwingli*. He, however, simply emphasized the parting promise of Christ, "Lo, I am with you always" (Matt. 28:20) and the fundamental relation between Christ and his Church, the head and the body, as

vouching for the real *presence* of the God-man in the sacrament, without attempting to define the *nature* of this presence.

d. This practical view which holds to the *personal presence* of Christ in the sacrament, without discussing speculative questions, like the “ubiquity” of the glorified body, commends itself to Christians of different denominations. Certainly at the time of the institution of the ordinance neither the material nor the glorified body of Christ was given to the disciples of which to partake. Besides that, a strictly corporeal conception of the Lord’s supper, *separates* this sacrament too much from the other sacrament of Baptism. For the water of Baptism, though it represents the Blood of Christ poured out for our forgiveness, is not taken by any one as being *actually* either the material or glorified blood of Christ. On the other hand the promise given: “Lo, I am with you alway” assures the believer of Christ’s continued personal presence with his people, which in the sacrament is made *special* and *tangible* in the elements.

As to *unbelievers*, what is said of the Holy Spirit, viz., that the world cannot receive him, must also apply to the sacramental gift. They receive only the material elements and not Christ, but the contempt of the sacrament on their part brings a judgment.

4. *The Benefits of the Holy Communion.*

As the sacrament of Baptism symbolizes and pledges the beginning of spiritual life and of the covenant relation between God and man, so the Holy Communion is the sacrament for *nourishing* and strengthening this life through continued communion with our Saviour. On this general principle the following particular points may be enumerated as benefits of the sacrament: a. It is a *memorial* of the death of Christ and a *profession* of faith in his redeeming work on the part of the believer, Luke 22:19. b. It is a *tangible pledge* of the forgiveness of our sin through the

shedding of the blood of Christ, Matt 26:28. *c.* It is a *covenant* rite between the believer and Christ who is the "bread of life" and imparts to us an increased power of *sanctification*, John 6:56. *d.* It is also an emblem of the *communion* of believers with each other, and intended to strengthen Christian fellowship, I Cor. 10:17. *e.* Finally, it confirms the assurance of *eternal life* and of the resurrection of the body; John 6:54 and Matt. 26:29: "I say unto you, I shall not drink henceforth of the fruit of the wine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."

While all these blessings may substantially be enjoyed through the Word of God without the sacrament, they are made more tangible and more direct by the presence of the elements.

5. *Proper Candidates for the Holy Communion.*

According to Scripture and Church rule, there are *three* requirements for a worthy partaking of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, viz.:

a. Baptism and Christian Instruction. The ordinance of baptism naturally precedes the second sacrament, as in meaning so in the order of time. A proper understanding of the significance of the ordinance also is needed, not in the sense of a clear intellectual comprehension, yet sufficient for a true valuation of this solemn rite.

b. Earnest self-examination, resulting in a sincere desire to be cleansed from the guilt and power of sin, I Cor. 11:28.

c. Prayer and faith in the divine promise of salvation and of communion with Christ.

The Protestant Churches do *not* admit *children* to the second sacrament, because the self-examination which the Apostle Paul enjoins upon all communicants cannot be expected, until the child is old enough to make a public profession of faith. The custom of some denominations of holding a *Love-Feast* before the celebration of the Holy Communion has its Biblical foundation in the Agape of the

apostolic Church (I Cor. 11:20) and is a valuable symbol of the spirit of brotherly love, which should animate all those who want to come to the Lord's table.

Some denominations do not allow the administering of the sacrament in *private*, because it is a rite of Christian communion. While this argument may be urged against the Roman priests taking the sacrament regularly, without the congregation participating, it does not apply to giving the communion to the *sick*. For it is first of all a communion between Christ and the individual believer, and in the second place only, a communion of believers with each other.

Some Churches admit to the sacrament none but members of their own Church (*Close Communion*). So far as the ordinance is expressive of Christian fellowship, the drawing of denominational lines may be in order. Those who do not acknowledge Christians of other denominations as properly qualified to fill the requirements of communicants, act consistently, if they keep close communion. On the other hand, the conviction that membership in any Christian Church, accompanied by the manifestation of a Christian life, is a sufficient qualification for admission to the sacrament, naturally implies open Communion.

Part Sixth—Final Things.

CHAPTER XLIV. THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

1. *An Axiom of Christian Belief.*

The natural end of our earthly life is physical death. When the heart stands still and the pulse ceases to beat, the dissolution of the body begins and the material parts, held together so far by the human soul or spirit, fall asunder. What becomes of that soul itself? It is a general human conviction and an axiom of the Christian faith that the *soul* of man does *not perish* with the body but continues to exist as an individual essence. The philosopher I. Kant called this belief one of the three postulates of practical reason—with God and duty as the two others, while the naturalist Haeckel has termed them the three buttresses of superstition which must be demolished. *Materialism* regards the soul as a mere function of bodily organs, which therefore must perish, when these organs cease to work, while the *pantheist* declares that the soul of the human race, as a whole, may be imperishable, but the individual soul is drowned in the ocean of eternity. The question indeed is not about continued existence as such. The conservation of both matter and energy excludes the thought of annihilation. Nothing perishes; death merely means change of the form of existence. But the immortality of the *individual* soul and *consciousness* is to many men a matter of doubt or unbelief.

2. *Rational Arguments.*

Ancient and modern philosophers and thinkers have endeavored to firmly establish the immortality of the individual soul by various arguments which may be summed up under the following heads:

a. Historical argument. Belief in man's continued existence after death is one of the most ancient and widespread

human convictions. From the dawn of history to the present day, the idea of personal immortality is common to all nations. Egyptians, Babylonians, Greeks and Romans, Chinese and Hindus, Kaffirs and Eskimoes have a common faith in holding to a conscious life after the dissolution of the body. Such a universal conviction must spring from an objective reality.

b. Metaphysical argument. The soul of man has an absolutely simple subject in the personal consciousness of self or "I," which as such cannot perish in death. What is not compounded, cannot be dissolved. We do not claim an absolutely simple, individual and indivisible existence of the soul aside from the body. As argued in Plato's *Phaedon*, the soul might be only the harmony of a musical instrument, which ceases with the instrument, or a flame of fire which is quenched, when the material on which it feeds is consumed. But the self-conscious "I," so far as we know, is a perfect unity, indivisible and therefore imperishable.

c. Teleological argument. Man is conscious of capacities and ideals, for which the brief span of the present life offers no room of realization. The majority of men do not attain the object of their striving, nor achieve that for which they have talents and inclination. Continued individual existence is necessary, in order to complete what remains unfinished at the hour of death. Man is the one being on earth, that has the power to understand the world and God has "set eternity in his heart" (Eccles. 3:11). He discovers and aims at the infinite. Must there not be another life, when this earthly life is cut off? Is the individual, as some say, to be nothing more than a leaf or blossom on the world-tree, which must wither and die, while the tree of humanity continues to grow?

d. Moral argument. There is a universal sense of justice in the human soul, which declares that right doing and happiness, wrong doing and punishment or pain, belong together. But this connection is not always maintained in the present life. Man in this world is not adequately re-

warded or punished for his deeds. Therefore, we expect a future retribution. God's righteous rule must be fully vindicated, if not here, then in a life to come. This argument, it is true, presupposes the existence of a personal and righteous God. As in regard to the existence of God, so here and even in a higher degree, all philosophic arguments can give no absolute evidence, so as to compel belief; they furnish but a rational basis for the natural conviction of personal immortality.

There might be added to these arguments the occasional testimony of creditable witnesses, as to a *direct evidence* of the continued existence of the departed, received through certain sights and sounds, tangible manifestations and messages from the dead. But such evidence is too sporadic and subjective to be generally accepted.

3. *The Teachings of the Bible.*

The certainty of a continued personal existence after death must be based upon divine revelation. The *ancient covenant* people already had a firmer assurance of the immortality of the spirit, than Greek and Roman philosophy generally could furnish. We read of Abraham that in dying he was gathered to his people (Gen. 25:8, 9) and of Jacob, that he expected to meet his son Joseph in the spirit-world (Gen. 37:35). The record of the translation of Enoch and Elijah and the calling up of the spirit of Samuel (I Sam. 28) testify to the general belief in a future consciousness. However, as the Old Testament deals mainly with the present life, as to righteousness and piety and their reward, the revelation concerning the future life is still very limited. The righteous and the wicked alike go to *Sheol* or the spirit-world, where they rest from earthly troubles, but have only a shadowy existence of weakness and darkness. Gradually, however, a higher conception of the future and of reward or punishment after death became general.

Job confesses his conviction in these words: "I know

that my *Redeemer* liveth...and after my skin, even this body, is destroyed, then without my flesh shall I see God, whom I, even I, shall see" (Job 19:25, 26). The *Psalmist* expects a deliverance of the righteous from Sheol: "Thou wilt not leave my soul to Sheol, neither wilt thou suffer thy holy one to see corruption" (Ps. 16:10), and the *prophets* Isaiah, Ezekiel and Daniel interpret the assurance of the restoration and revival of their nation, to include the resurrection of the *individual* members of their people and the restoration even of their bodies. (Isa. 26:19; Ez. 37:1, etc.; Dan. 12:2, 3.) In the days of the Maccabees, the doctrine of personal immortality and rewards and punishments in the other world was distinctly proclaimed and became a source of strength and comfort to the pious (Mac. 7:9, 14).

This Jewish belief in immortality received a confirmation as well as a deeper meaning in the promise of *eternal life*, given by *Christ* and pledged by his own resurrection from the dead; as Paul writes: "Our Saviour, Christ Jesus, abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (II Tim. 1:10). It is noteworthy, however, that this promise of eternal life is invariably coupled with *faith in Christ* and communion with him. (John 11:25, "He that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live, and whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die." I Cor. 15:17, "If Christ hath not been raised, your faith is vain; then they also that are fallen asleep in Christ, have perished"). Man viewed merely as a natural being is not necessarily immortal, and sinful man, as such, has not eternal life dwelling in him. The Creator alone has immortality as an absolute possession (I Tim. 6:16) and can dispose of the creature, as he pleases, or bring to an end the life which he called into existence.

Christ, indeed, gave to the words *life* and *death* a new meaning by saying: "This is life eternal that they should know Thee, the only true God, and Him whom Thou didst send, even Jesus Christ" (John 17:3), and "He that heareth my word and believeth him that sent me, hath eternal life,

...and hath passed out of death into life'' (John 5:24). This is a spiritual life or a spiritual death beginning in man while here on earth, which must work out its destiny in the other world. Thus eternal life, in the sense of conscious blessedness and immortality, is promised to *believers* only. Independent, however, of such immortality, the New Testament also states distinctly, that unbelievers shall have to give an account of themselves and of their lives hereafter and shall be brought before the judgment seat of Christ, to receive their final doom. In that sense, the immortality or continued existence of all souls after death is taught in the Bible.

CHAPTER XLV. THE DEPARTED SPIRITS OR THE INTERMEDIATE STATE.

1. *Opinions Expressed on this Subject.*

When it is accepted and conceded that the soul of man survives the death of the body and maintains an independent, individual existence, the important question is, *what is the state or condition of this departed spirit?*

a. Transmigration. Among nations and people outside of the pale of revealed religion the idea of a *transmigration* of the soul after death has found many adherents, both among uncivilized savages and among the most cultured people and thoughtful philosophers. It is either on the ground of the spirit of man needing an embodiment and therefore seeking a new body, or on the moral and ethical ground of the soul having to pass through a number of births and material forms of existence, for the sake of its purification, that the belief in the transmigration of the departed spirit, has been very generally accepted and taught. Brahmanic Hindus and Buddhists agree in holding, that until the soul of man has fully expiated for sin and been entirely purified, it must continue to be born in some material form. The Jewish "Cabbala" (mystical writing)

and the Christian sect of the Manichaeans entertained the same opinion.

b. Hades, the Spirit world. The prevailing idea among the Jews at the time of Christ's birth was, that after death all the departed spirits meet in a place or realm called Sheol, where they remain in expectation of the coming of the Messiah (Dan. 12:13). This Sheol was generally supposed to be a subterranean abode, where the departed dwelt as shades, forms without substance, living in a dream-like state. However, the condition of the souls in Sheol was not regarded as all alike. There were *two divisions*, viz., Abraham's bosom for the faithful, where rest and comfort could be found after life's tribulations, and Gehenna, the place of torment for the wicked and the idolaters. With the prevalence of the Greek language, the Greek word *Hades* (invisible or unseen world) replaced the Hebrew Sheol, and the two divisions became Paradise and Tartarus. Although the teachings of Christ necessitated some modification of this belief, the Church fathers in substance accepted these Jewish and Greek ideas, about an intermediate state between death and resurrection. It was generally held, that the spirits of the departed are *all gathered* in Hades, awaiting the second coming of Christ which would bring the resurrection of the dead. Martyrs alone would go right after death to the heavenly paradise, spoken of by Paul in II Cor. 12:2-4.

c. Purgatory. Origen declared that no Christian could come into the presence of God before he had passed through the refining fire of purification, referred to in I Cor. 3:13-15. Augustine also spoke of the *ignis purgatorius*, which no one could escape who had not become entirely free from the pollution of sin before dying. Pope Gregory, the Great, (A.D. 600) then gave his official sanction to the doctrine of purgatory as a place of *purification* and training, through suffering for sins that were not yet atoned for. The intercession of the saints might shorten the time of purgatory. This idea led to the establishment of soul masses and

requiems. The scholastic theology of the Middle Ages then taught a *fourfold* distinction of states or abodes of the departed spirits, viz.: 1. The *Heavenly Paradise*, for the saints. 2. *Hell*, for the devils, the heathen and all men who die in mortal sin without confession. 3. *Purgatory*, for all unsanctified Christians. The duration and intensity of suffering here depends on the degree of guilt incurred. It may be for a few hours or for thousands of years, but it can be shortened by intercessory prayer and the sacrifice of the Holy Mass.

4. The *Limbus Infantum* (Infants' Enclosure) for unbaptized children, who are not admitted to heaven, because their "original sin" has not been washed away in baptism, yet cannot be punished either, because they have not consciously sinned.

d. Immediate and final bliss or woe. The Reformers of the sixteenth century, as well as the *Unitas Fratrum* before them, rejected all these speculations as to the condition of the departed spirits. They held, that the one sacrifice of Christ avails for the forgiveness of all sin and that any additional satisfaction after death is both superfluous and impossible. But being concerned mostly about the present need of salvation, these Reformers paid little attention to eschatological questions. Hence the *creeds* of the Protestant Churches, in general, make little reference to the state of the soul after death. The prevailing conviction however was this, that death is followed immediately by the judgment either of salvation or condemnation.

Accordingly the departed at once enter either the state of eternal bliss or eternal woe; they are either in *heaven* or in *hell*; as the Westminster Catechism puts it: "The souls of the righteous being made perfect in holiness, are received into the highest heavens, where they behold the face of God, while the souls of the wicked are cast into hell, where they remain in utter darkness." It was generally held, also, that this judgment of condemnation included all Heathen, Jews and Mohammedans. In the eighteenth century, when the

age of missions began, this view gradually began to be changed.

2. *The Existence of an Intermediate State.*

The first question in the consideration of this subject must be: Is there really such an intermediate state? As the resurrection of the body does not take place immediately after death and as the last judgment is still a thing of the future, it appears self-evident that the intervening of some kind of an *intermediate* state for the spirits of the departed is well *established*. The believer does not attain to the state of perfection, until he is clothed with the new and immortal body, and the state of the unbeliever is not yet absolutely final, so long as the last judgment has not taken place. The different degree of maturity of the spirits of men, at their departure, also confirms the belief that a transition period will prepare them for their final destiny.

3. *The State of Transition.*

Some hold that the soul after death has only an *unconscious* existence, is either dead or asleep until the time of resurrection. This belief is based either upon the difficulty of conceiving any kind of conscious life and activity of the spirit without a bodily organism, or upon the words, "death" and "sleep," as applied in Scripture to the departed, necessarily implying unconsciousness. But this theory does not agree with our Saviour's declaration concerning the intermediate state. He spoke of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as all "living unto God" (Luke 20:38); of Abraham's rejoicing to see His day, "and he saw it and was glad" (John 8:56); and in the parable of the Rich man, of his conversing with Abraham from Hades. What is more, Christ cheered the malefactor on the cross by the promise: "To-day shalt thou be *with me* in Paradise" and Paul looked forward with desire to the time, when he would "depart and be with Christ: for it is far better" (Phil. 1:23). A "soul sleep" from the day of death to the day

of resurrection would not be a joyful prospect to the Christian, who here on earth had the Spirit of Christ dwelling in him and who would thus be deprived of the blessings of a conscious communion with Christ and with fellow-believers.

We therefore look upon the intermediate state as a state of *conscious transition* from the earthly life to the final condition of man. Death brings us into a new world, which must be a world of realities, as contrasted with this world of appearances. When the veil which in this world of sense covers many things is lifted, when the confounding voices of earthly excitement have been silenced, the spirit of man may awake to a fuller consciousness than it ever had before. Death changes the environment, but it will hardly change the character and individuality of the departed. It seems but natural to think, that the difference in principles and tendencies which here on earth exists between the children of God and the ungodly, will become more marked and the gulf between both will widen (Luke 16:26). As indicated in the parable of the Rich man and Lazarus, the awakening in the spirit world must, to him who lived a life of sin, bring a sense of want and a feeling of anguish, in *anticipation* of the *judgment* to come. To the believer, the entrance into the new world should bring a sense of relief and a joyful *anticipation* of eternal bliss.

At the same time the intermediate state is supposed to be one of development. The great majority of men die before they have attained their spiritual maturity. There will be room for growth in sanctification and purification. We cannot accept the Roman doctrine of the *purgatory*, because to make satisfaction for sins committed on earth is neither necessary nor possible. The one offering of Christ suffices for all times and for all sin that is repented of (1 John 1:7). But in a purely spiritual sense, such a gradual purging and perfecting of the spirit for the purpose of attaining holiness appears more probable, than a sudden attainment of perfection.

4. *The Condition of the Believer.*

Scripture and reason appear to warrant our acceptance of the following five declarations concerning the condition of the departed believer, as being well founded.

a. It will be a *state of rest* from labor and trouble, of deliverance from the misery of a sinful world. Heb. 4:9, "There remaineth a sabbath rest for the people of God." Rev. 14:13, "That they may rest from their labors; for their works follow them." All the imperfections and inconsistencies of this earthly life, also, which originate from the conflict between flesh and spirit may be supposed to cease, when the body is laid to rest and the spirit is free from temptation. *b.* The believer goes to his *Saviour*, to enjoy undisturbed fellowship with him, as Paul writes in II Cor. 5:8: "We are of good courage and are willing rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord," and in Phil. 1:23, "Having the desire to depart and be with Christ." In this sense, we may say that the departed believer is in *heaven*; because where Christ is, there is heaven and happiness. But the intermediate state is not yet the state of perfection, not the attainment of eternal glory. *c.* As a time of waiting and *preparation* for the "redemption of the body" (Rom. 8:23), we may expect a gradual maturing of all the vital germs of spiritual life that were implanted into our being while on earth. It may be a growth comparable to that of a flower bulb planted in the ground, which first strikes roots beneath, before the stalk, the leaf and the flower appear above ground. *d.* Such a state of rest, however, need not exclude *activity* for Christ's kingdom. It would seem unlikely, that those who have served their Lord in their earthly lives with zeal and cheerfulness, should in the intermediate state pass their time entirely inactive. From passages like Heb. 12:1, "compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses," it may be concluded that the departed are cognizant of events transpiring in this material world, and from the reported appearing of Samuel to Saul, and of Moses and Elijah on

the mount of transfiguration, it may be inferred that at least exceptionally the departed spirits may come into direct contact with the world of man. *e.* Finally, we cannot help thinking that they must be able to *commune* with each other. Earthly ties of love and friendship, if sanctified by divine love, seem to be an essential part of continued human happiness, which cannot be wanting in the intermediate state. However, the vague and sentimental expectation of a universal happy reunion of all in the spirit world who on earth were connected by natural relationship or affection, finds no support either in the letter or in the spirit of the Holy Scriptures. We are led to believe rather, that in the world to come all relations of love and fellowship are conditioned upon the fundamental relation of the soul to Christ and his salvation.

5. *The Condition of the Unbeliever.*

As regards the ungodly, we know that the intermediate state is also not final. Otherwise there would be no judgment day for them at the end of our world. Furthermore, in order that the judgment appear in strict accord with manifest guilt, a maturing of the sinful principles and tendencies of the ungodly and unbeliever is required. If physical death is to the believer the opening of a gate which leads to paradise, and brings a foretaste of heaven, the same gate must to the unbeliever mean a passing into a *dungeon* or rather a deeper *descent* toward the final doom. To him who has lived a life of ungodly selfishness and sin, the spirit world must bring a painful realization of want, a loss of all that was dear to him, a feeling of misery and suffering, such as is illustrated by the outcry of Dives in the parable: "I am in anguish in this flame" (Luke 16:24). If the wicked take their evil conscience, their envy and hatred, their pride and lust, and all their ungratified passions with them into the intermediate state, their condition cannot be otherwise than wretched. Compare II Pet.

2:9, "The Lord knoweth how to keep the unrighteous under punishment unto the day of judgment."

Holy Scripture holds out no hope of *conversion* after death to those who have *wilfully* rejected the grace of God and have thus committed the sin "against the Holy Spirit which shall not be forgiven, neither in this world nor in that which is to come" (Matt. 12:32). There is no "second probation" after death promised to him "who hath trodden under foot the Son of God and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace" (Heb. 10:29). For him there remains nothing but "a certain fearful expectation of judgment" (Heb. 10:27). Here on earth, the sinner may cover his evil heart and life with the cloak of hypocrisy; he may deceive others as well as himself, to the last, with vain hopes of reformation. But this deception must cease after death; the manifestation of the innermost tendency must become ever more plain, as men are ripening for the judgment day.

6. *Infants and Those who Have not Heard the Gospel.* But how about those who can neither be properly classed with the believers nor with the unbelievers, because, while in this earthly life, they neither had any conscious faith in Christ nor did they reject the grace of God and his salvation consciously or wilfully. There are *three classes* of such, viz.: *a.* All those who die in infancy, before arriving at moral consciousness; that is about one-third of humanity. *b.* People living in Christian countries who, though they may have some knowledge of Christianity, yet never in their life had the gospel properly presented to them. *c.* All the Mohammedans, Jews and Heathen of the present day who die without knowing the way of salvation, including all the millions who departed this life before the birth of the Saviour.

With regard to *Infants*, we have Christ's promise: "To such belongeth the kingdom of heaven," and "It is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones shall perish" (Matt. 17:14 and 18:14). But we are also taught that "what is born of the flesh is flesh" and

“except one be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” Infants also can be saved only *through Christ* and must be regenerated. Some are of the opinion that, as infants at the time of death can as yet have no personal faith, this condition of salvation is not required in their case and they are saved without probation or personal decision. Some derive special comfort from the thought, that thus at least one-third of humanity is sure to be saved by dying in infancy, before they commit personal transgression. But the dying infants surely cannot for ever remain infants, incapable of a personal decision. If all who die in infancy are of necessity heirs of the kingdom, irrespective of any exercise of their free will and knowledge, why should not all those who would be lost by continuing to live, be rather permitted to die as children? If the intermediate state is in any sense a time of development and training, what is more natural than to think, that the hour of *decision* and of a conscious faith will come to these infants after death? Without saying that every one who dies in childhood must on that account go to heaven, we may have this confidence, that the love and wisdom of God will appoint to every human being the best opportunity for attaining salvation, whether it be by living in the body and in this material world or out of the body and in the spirit world.

As to the *Heathen* and the many *nominal Christians* who depart this life without having gained a saving knowledge of Christ, we cannot believe, that the majority of all these die in a state of spiritual hardening and wickedness that would make their sin absolute and unpardonable. God “would have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth” (I Tim. 2:4), and “he is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to him” (Acts 10:35). And yet “in none other is there salvation, neither is there any other name under heaven, wherein we must be saved,” but the name of Jesus Christ. We have Christ’s own promise,

that the Gospel "shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony unto all the nations" (Matt. 24:14), before the end comes. Does this not also include those in the world of departed spirits? It is admitted that the passages of Holy Scripture which may serve as proof-texts for this belief are few and of disputed application. However, they furnish sufficient ground for the hope that, before the judgment day, the salvation which is in Christ Jesus shall have been offered to all the *dead* as well as to all the *living*. Peter testifies: "For unto this end was the gospel preached even to the dead, that they might be judged indeed according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit" (I Pet. 4:6). If Christ "preached unto the spirits in prison, that aforetime were disobedient, when the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah" (I Pet. 3:19), what hinders us to believe, that such preaching has been continued ever since, by the servants of Christ, to all those who have died before the joyful message of salvation reached them. For this means the great majority of the human race.

Some indeed consider this a dangerous doctrine, because they fear it might lessen the missionary zeal of saving the heathen, before they die and are lost, or because it admits a "probation" or decision after death. They hold that the time of decision for all men must be in this life and that the heathen will be judged without reference to the Gospel, simply on the ground of their *works* and their *faithfulness*, with the light of knowledge which they had of God and of righteousness. (Rom. 2:6, 8, "Who will render to every man according to his works: to them that by patience in well doing seek for glory and honor and incorruption, eternal life; but unto them that are factious and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, shall be wrath and indignation.") But if the heathen could be saved without the gospel of Jesus Christ, his salvation, his suffering, death and resurrection would avail only for a small portion of humanity, instead of being the "propitiation not for our

sins only, but also for the *whole world*'' (I John 2:2). Surely the declarations of Scripture, that men cannot be saved without faith in Christ and without his grace, are plain and emphatic (Acts 4:12; Mark 16:16, etc.).

This fact does not conflict with the idea that the work of preparation for salvation ("prevenient grace") begins, even with the heathen, in their earthly life and that the response to it marks the fundamental tendency of every man. In that sense, the decision is made here, without a knowledge of Christ: The heathen may have a saving faith and the grace of God working in him; only he needs to be brought to the light and to the personal knowledge of the Redeemer, before his faith can be perfected and his calling and salvation be made sure.

7. The "*Place of the Departed Spirits.*"

The idea has frequently been expressed that the departed spirit may have some kind of an intermediate *body*, the fruit as it were of the earthly development and the vital germ for the resurrection body. Some think that this interim body furnishes the medium of communication between the departed spirits. In the absence of any Biblical instruction or other evidence for this theory, it can only be an interesting suggestion.

Connected with it is the question about the place or abode of the departed. Several Old Testament declarations give expression to the idea, that the realm of the departed spirit is some kind of an *underground* world (Ez. 32:18, 21; Isa. 14:9, 15). However, these passages simply refer to the prevalent idea of antiquity, that the soul after death still remains near the body which is buried in the earth. Doubtless the spirit-world is a condition or state of existence, rather than a place; the soul as such needs *no local abode* and cannot be confined to any particular locality. Still the natural limitation which attaches to everything human, including the human spirit, seems to demand some kind of a definite abode or sphere for departed spirits. Shall we con-

clude from father Abraham's reply to the rich man in the parable: "Between us and you there is a great gulf fixed," that there is a local separation of the blessed dead from the ungodly? Does Paul's statement in II Cor. 12:2-4, about his being "caught up even to the third heaven, into Paradise and hearing unspeakable words, . . . whether in the body or apart from the body," refer to such a heavenly abode of the souls of believers? These and similar questions cannot at present be answered definitely.

This doctrine of Hades holds out no hope of a second probation for those who have known the truth on earth and have rejected it, but it avails itself of the riches of divine love and mercy, as open to all who can be saved.

CHAPTER XLVI. THE RESURRECTION.

1. *The Valuation of the Body.*

The belief in the resurrection or restoration of the body is not exclusively a Christian dogma. The teaching of Zoroaster of Persia (Zarathustra), and the mythologies of different nations, as well as the popular belief of men in general holds to it, but the philosophies of Greece and of India almost unanimously oppose it. The latter, realizing the conflicts which constantly arise from the contact of flesh and spirit, declared the body a clog to the spirit, a *prison-house* of the soul, or at best a temporary home, a garment which man must be glad to lay aside when he attains to his perfect state. Accordingly the blessedness of the future life, as depicted by these philosophers, includes a permanent release of the good and wise from the fetters of the body, as the cause of misery and the source of evil.

The Christian on the contrary who knows that the material world is good because God made it, that the physical part of his being is a divine creation as well as his spiritual part, regards the body as the Godgiven *organ* and *home* of the soul. It is only in consequence of the apostacy

of the human spirit from God, that the body has become sinful flesh, which must be mortified. But such mortifying applies also to the soul of the natural man, and the regenerate are sanctified in body as well as in spirit (I Thess. 5:23). The physical part receives a new preciousness and dignity as the *temple* of the Holy Spirit, as Paul writes in I Cor. 6:19: "Know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have from God? glorify God therefore in your body." Thus we look upon the body as essential to complete our manhood. Although, because of sin, it must undergo a radical change, it is destined to share the future glory of the sanctified spirit, in order that man may again become the physico-spiritual being that he was, when originally created. Hence the Christian looks forward to a time when his physical nature also will be regenerated and made to conform to the regenerate spirit.

2. *The Truth of the Resurrection.*

The resurrection or regeneration of the body is rejected, *a.* By the *materialist*, who holds that soul and body are identical and that there is no future life and no resurrection, because the death of the body ends the existence of the soul; *b.* By the *pantheist*, who teaches that the individual soul loses its personality in death and is absorbed in the world-soul; *c.* By the *Swedenborgian*, who believes, that the material body cannot rise again, because the spiritual body has its resurrection at the moment of death, and the physical part of man is only the shell that must be broken, in order to bring the spiritual body to light.

Over against these denials, the Christian finds the resurrection of the body *plainly taught* in the Holy Scriptures. In the *Old Testament*, this is done rather by implication than directly. Thus the prophets Hosea, Isaiah and Ezekiel announce the national restoration and resurrection of Israel, under the figure of a bodily re-animation or *regeneration*. (Isa. 26:19, Hosea 13:14, Ezek. 37:5, 12, "Thy dead shall

live: my dead bodies shall arise.” “I will ransom them from the power of Sheol; I will redeem them from death. O death, where are thy plagues? O Sheol, where is thy destruction?” “Thus saith the Lord Jehovah unto these bones: Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you and ye shall live. Behold, I will open your graves and cause you to come up out of your graves.”) The only direct declaration of a future resurrection both of the godly and the ungodly is given in Dan. 12:2: “And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth, shall awake, some to everlasting life and some to shame and everlasting contempt.” As the resurrection of Christ was still a future event, the true relation between the present state of man and the future spiritual state could not be fully revealed even unto the prophets.

In the *New Testament*, however, the resurrection of the body is clearly taught in many places, like Phil. 3:21, “Who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to the body of his glory.” Christ himself bore witness to this truth in public discourse and private conversation with his disciples, saying *e. g.*, “The hour cometh, in which all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment” (John 5:28). St. Paul, in defending this truth against certain Corinthian teachers who doubted or denied the doctrine, makes it an *essential* of the Christian faith by writing: “If there be no resurrection of the dead, neither hath Christ been raised; and if Christ hath not been raised, then is our preaching vain, your faith also is vain” (I Cor. 15:14).

It is noteworthy, however, that this resurrection, so far as it means a restoration or regeneration of the body, is closely connected with the person and work of Christ only. It would appear, therefore, that the *assurance* of our resurrection rests on these *two points*: 1. On the resurrection of Christ as the objective *pledge* and guarantee of the promise.

John 11:25, "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live." 2. On personal *fellowship* with Christ and the infusion of his Spirit as the power that will raise the body of the believer. Rom. 8:11, "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, he that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall give life also to your mortal bodies through his Spirit that dwelleth in you." Thus the resurrection unto life is directly assured only to the believer.

Independently of this promise, both Christ and the apostles speak of a resurrection of *unbelievers*, not unto life, but unto condemnation. As it is difficult to conceive of a regeneration of the bodies of the ungodly, their resurrection may possibly mean simply, that their souls will be called up only for judgment and to receive their final doom. However this may be, in some sense or other, there will be a resurrection of all men, though this may not imply a restoration of their bodies.

3. *The Nature of the Resurrection Body.*

With regard to the nature of the resurrection body, we find in the New Testament *two negative* statements, viz., Christ's word in Matt. 22:30, "In the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in *marriage*, but are as angels in heaven," and Paul's word in I Cor. 15:50, "Now this I say, brethren, that *flesh* and *blood* cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." Whatever therefore in the present body is intended to meet earthly requirements only, in the matter of sex or material form and condition, will cease with the life which now is. The future body will not be a natural or *psychical* body, adapted to the present earthly nature of man's soul and to the material world in which he lives and moves, but a *spiritual* (pneumatic) body fitted for the use of the sanctified spirit and adapted to the regenerated world in which we are to live. See I Cor. 15:44-49.

Paul's teaching on this subject in the passage just quoted, in Phil. 3:21 and in Rom. 8:22, 23, together with John's declaration: "We know that if he (Christ) shall be manifested, we shall be like him: for we shall see him even as he is," enable us also to make some *positive* statements concerning the nature and form of the resurrection body, viz.: *a*. It will be *incorruptible*, honorable and perfect, not like the present body subject to accidents which mar the beauty or destroy the energy of the body. "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power" (I Cor. 15:42, 43).

b. It will be *Christ-like*. As Jesus Christ manifested himself after his resurrection during the forty days and after his ascension in human form, so that he was recognized by the disciples, so shall our resurrection body be a glorified likeness of the present body, yet so that the higher religious principle shall have the predominance over the natural and psychical elements. "He shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory" (Phil. 2:21).

c. It will be a *material* body. The very idea of a body and the existence of a visible and tangible universe as the abode of the redeemed imply that the resurrection body will be of a *physical* nature, visible and tangible. It may be lighter than ether, quicker than lightning and more dynamic than electricity and yet be material in substance. It will bring man, on the physical side, back into the right relation to God and the universe, and through man nature, "now subject to vanity, . . . shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption" (Rom. 8:20, 21).

d. It will preserve the *identity* with the present body, expressing the individuality and the characteristics of each one, perhaps to a far more perfect degree than was the case on earth. This would imply also, that we shall recognize our friends and all the children of God of whom we have a spiritual knowledge, even as the disciples recognized Moses

and Elijah on the mount of transfiguration, and as we are promised to sit down in the future kingdom with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The resurrection body will be a perfect organ of the spirit for blessed fellowship with all the saints.

4. *Connection with the Present Body.*

There is no need of thinking or saying, that the same *material substance* which goes to make up the present body must be preserved for the formation of the resurrection body. Such a thing indeed is inconceivable. In the course of a life time the material particles of a human body are constantly renewed by organic functions, so as to be changed entirely even within a year. In fact, life is preserved only by the constant throwing off of dead matter and the assimilation of new particles. The same atoms which pass into one body may before have been in other combinations and may, in the course of centuries, have formed a part of *many bodies*, both of animals and of men, so that, according to the Sadducean reasoning about the wife who had seven husbands, seven different persons might claim the same body. But it is not the material particles which constitute the *unity* of the body in different periods of life. In a living organism identity depends rather upon the continuity of the inward *life* and the formative *principle*. The infant and the man are the same person through the unity of individual consciousness. Otherwise a person who has lived eighty years would represent a number of persons.

St. Paul, in writing to the Corinthians, has explained the relation between the present and the future body, by the grain which is put in the ground to die, but which produces the stalk of wheat. The grain of wheat is entirely unlike in substance to the full grown stalk and the ear of wheat that springs from it, yet the two belong together. What constitutes the *connecting link* between this earthly body and the resurrection body, it may be hard to define. Some think, that it is nothing more than the "individual idea," according to which God then fashions a new body having

the same characteristics as the former body. But the stress laid by the Apostle Paul on the necessity of sanctifying our present material body and keeping it pure, in view of the future life, would indicate that he, at least, thought of a direct *physical connection*, a vital germ of the resurrection body which accompanies the spirit into the intermediate state, awaiting the time when it may unfold its glory in the regenerated world.

5. *Transformation.*

This idea of a vital germ, as a connecting link between the earthly and the glorified body may help us to a better understanding of the transformation which, according to Scripture, those Christians shall experience who at the return of Christ will yet be found living on earth. For these shall not die but shall be changed (I Cor. 15:51-53 and I Thess. 4:17). Their present material form of existence is to be *transformed* into the spiritual state “in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed.” Such a transformation may have taken place in the case of Enoch and Elijah, if they were transferred to the world of glory without seeing death. The possibility of a spiritual germ forming within the present material organism would best account for such a sudden transformation. It is the change which probably would have been given to all men, without their seeing death, if sin had not interrupted the regular course of human development.

CHAPTER XLVII. THE JUDGMENT DAY.

1. *Its Reality.*

It has been said that the history of the human race, with all the punishment of individual transgression and all the manifestation of divine justice among the nations, is a continuous judgment day. "Die Weltgeschichte ist das Weltgericht." But these temporal judgments are only partial and imperfect. Holy Scripture announces the coming of a "*last judgment*" as the closing act of the present world-period. In the prophetic writings of the Old Testament, this "*day of the Lord*" was expected to come at the appearing of the Messiah, who would execute judgment upon the nations and bring salvation to God's chosen people. When Christ came, he said: "I came not to judge the world but to save the world" (John 12:47). At the same time he declared that the Father had given him "authority to execute judgment, because he is a son of man" (John 6:27), and in his last prophetic discourse, in Matt. 25, he gave a full description of that final judgment, in which the destinies of men are to be ultimately decided. While we cannot form an adequate conception of such a general judgment of mankind, we cannot doubt its reality, which is testified to most solemnly by Christ and his apostles.

2. *The Judge and the Judged.*

Jesus Christ, the Saviour, is appointed to be the judge, as Paul writes: "We must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ." He who humbled himself before the unjust tribunal of Caiphas and of Pilate, will execute a righteous judgment over all the tribes of men. He has assumed human nature, was tempted, as men are, has died to save men from sin and perdition and thus stands in closest relationship to mankind. At the same time he is divine, omniscient, all righteous and all merciful, thus ensuring all that is needful for a true judgment.

The *persons* to be *judged*, according to II Peter 2:4, are men and angels. Here we meet an apparent contradiction in the statement of John 5:24, that the believer “cometh not into judgment, but hath passed out of death into life,” and the declaration in Rom. 14:10, that “we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of God.” But the contradiction is only apparent. All must come into the presence of the judge to have their sentence proclaimed, but the judgment of the believer is one of honorable acquittal. Again in Matt. 19:28 the disciples are told that “when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, they also shall sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel;” and in I Cor. 6:2 and 3, “Know ye not, that the saints shall *judge the world?*...Know ye not, that we shall judge angels?” Unless we assume a twofold judgment, as some do, one for believers and a second one for unbelievers, at which the believers take an active part, the obvious understanding will be this, that the judgment passed on the believer, since it manifests his perfect salvation, is *equivalent* with his judging the unbelieving world. The righteousness which the children of God have gained through faith in Christ Jesus and the works of love which they have been enabled to do, by the grace of God, will testify against those who have not accepted this salvation.

3. *The Grounds of the Judgment.*

The object of the final judgment then is not so much to ascertain, as to manifest the character of the persons to be judged and to assign to them their corresponding destiny. What has virtually been decided already in the particular judgment of each individual, will in this general judgment be publicly *vindicated* and proclaimed. This character of the last judgment accounts for the fact that, in numerous passages of Scripture, the *works* of the children of God are mentioned as the evidence of their salvation, rather than their faith. As the harvest day shows the fruit, so the judgment day will show the inward nature of all by their

works, in such a manner as to leave no shadow of doubt in regard to the justice of the sentence which shall be pronounced. Christ "will make manifest the counsels of the heart, and then shall each man have his praise from God" (I Cor. 4:5). But this does not annul the oft repeated declaration, that only "he that believeth shall be saved, but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned;" and "He that believeth on Him is not judged, he that believeth not hath been judged already, because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God" (John 3:18).

There can be *no double standard* of judgment, some to be judged by the Gospel and some by the law of works. The works are not the ground of salvation, but they prove the genuineness of saving faith. Whatever has been said and done will be considered in its relation to Christ, the only Saviour of mankind. The righteous will be accepted, because what they have done was done unto Christ, consciously or unconsciously, and the unrighteous will be condemned, because they have done nothing unto Christ. Compare Matt. 25:45, "Then shall he answer them saying: Verily, I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of these least, ye did it not unto me."

4. *The Final State of the Blessed.*

To the believer, the day of judgment presents a happy prospect, which inspires him with grateful joy. For it will bring to him the actual inheritance of "the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world" (Matt. 25:34). The blessedness of this future state is presented to us in the New Testament as including the following:

a. *Perfect peace* with God and uninterrupted communion with Christ and the children of God. Scripture combines the attractions of a home, the enjoyment of a marriage feast, the charms of the paradise and similar figures, in speaking of the future state of believers. It means glory

(II Cor. 4:17), holiness (Rev. 21:27), knowledge (I Cor. 13:8-10), and worship (Rev. 19:1).

b. Perfect life. The idea of the "life eternal" which the blessed will inherit, involves a happy activity, without weariness and disturbance. While the perfect life of the creature can have only one eternal center around which it moves, viz., the triune God, the creator, redeemer and finisher of salvation, we may rest assured, that there will be the greatest diversity in the manifestation of this life and many channels of work and activity.

c. Grateful memories. Another source of happiness must be the relief from trouble and pain, the freedom from all the sin and misery, which in the present life disturb our felicity. A thankful recollection of the gracious leadings of the Lord with each individual soul, as well as the contemplation of the wonderful plan of salvation, then first fully understood, and of the divine wisdom and love manifested in the history of the Church and of the world,—will doubtless furnish an inexhaustible theme of adoration and thanksgiving.

d. Happy environments. As to the place or sphere of the future life indicated by the word "heaven," we are given in the Scriptures but a few intimations, sufficient to excite our hope and to inspire our faith, but not enough to enable us to form a clear conception of what it will be. We read of many mansions in the Father's house (John 14:2), of a new heaven and a new earth (II Pet. 3:13), and in the book of Revelation a full description is given of a *new Jerusalem*, "the foundations of the wall of the city adorned with all manner of precious stones;...and the twelve gates were twelve pearls;...and the street of the city was pure gold; and a river of water of life in the midst of the street and on this side of the river and on that was the tree of life, bearing twelve manner of fruits, yielding its fruit every month" (Rev. 21-22). There is no reason for doubting that with the glorified body the redeemed will also receive an abode

specially fitted for them, whether this be our regenerated earth or some other star or stars in the universe.

e. Degrees of glory. Finally, Scripture teaches that there will be different degrees of glory. Already in the book of Daniel it is written: "They that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever" (Dan. 12:3); and the Apostle Paul, in I Cor. 3:8, 14, tells us that "each shall receive his own reward according to his own labor; if any man's work shall abide which he built thereon, he shall receive a reward; if any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss." While all who inherit eternal life will be perfectly happy, so that their cups of blessing will run over, the cup itself will be of different size; the *capacity* for receiving determines the degree of glory. Beside the gift of salvation which all receive, there are *crowns* to be won. A crown of righteousness (II Tim. 4:8), a crown of glory (I Pet. 5:4), a crown of life (Jam. 1:12), or a martyr's crown (Rev. 3:11) await those who have been most faithful either in confessing Christ or in using the gifts and graces that were entrusted to them for Christ's kingdom.

5. *The State of the Ungodly.*

A dark contrast to the picture of heavenly glory prepared for the blessed, is presented in the condemnation which awaits the ungodly. Their future condition is described by Christ and the apostles as utterly wretched, "eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might" (II Thess. 1:9). Their place of abode is called "*hell*" (Gehenna, Matt. 10:28), a "furnace of fire" or a "lake of fire" and "the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt. 13:42, Rev. 20:15, Matt. 25:41). Their *suffering* is sometimes represented under the figure of a being burnt alive, sometimes under that of being consumed by worms, and sometimes simply as a being cast out from the king's palace into the cold darkness outside, where

“there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth” (Luke 13:28).

It is evident, that the figure of hell or gehenna, as a place where the fire is not quenched and their worm does not die (Mark 10:48), is drawn from the valley of *Hinnom*, south of Jerusalem, the sewer of the city, where the rubbish and carcasses were thrown to be devoured of vultures or gnawed by worms, and where fires were kept up to consume the refuse and to purify the atmosphere. Accordingly it is not essential to insist upon there being a material hell-fire, more than to take the worm which never dies to be a material worm. Yet the sufferings of the ungodly may be equal to, if not surpassing any picture that human imagination has drawn.

These sufferings must be supposed to arise from the following causes: *a.* The loss of all the earthly pleasures which constitute the highest good and the only source of happiness of the ungodly. The appetite and the passion remain, but there is no more gratification (Luke 16:24, “Send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue”). *b.* Exclusion from the presence and favor of God, which involves an absolute separation from Him, who is the source of all happiness (Matt. 25:41, “Depart from me, ye cursed”). *c.* Unrestrained *dominion* of sinful *passions*, without any redeeming feature. If the love of God and of each other will be the chief cause of the happiness of the redeemed, the absolute selfishness and hatred which must be supposed to sway the condemned, must make their state most unhappy, especially if it is combined with a compulsory association of like beings, so that their envy and fury can only turn against each other. (Rev. 22:15, “Without are the dogs and the sorcerers and the fornicators and the murderers and the idolaters and every one that loveth and maketh a lie.”)

CHAPTER XLVIII. THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

1. *The Importance of the Subject.*

The Holy Scriptures not only tell us of a beginning of human history but also of a consummation of all earthly things in the future. Though an unbelieving world declares that "all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation" (II Pet. 3:4), Christians are taught to look forward to a final goal of the earthly development, when the kingdom of nature and the kingdom of grace will be united in the *kingdom of glory*. To this end Christians are admonished to watch the "signs of the times" (Matt. 16:3) and the development of the kingdom of God, for the coming of which they pray and to do their part toward bringing about its consummation, knowing also that the individual believer is to find his perfection only in connection with the general establishment and triumph of that kingdom, as the writer to the Hebrews testifies in saying: "These all having had witness borne to them through their faith, received not the promise, God having provided some better thing concerning us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect" (Heb. 11:39, 40).

However, as to the *manner* in which this consummation will be brought about, we are largely in the same condition, as were the Old Testament believers with regard to the day of the Lord and the coming of the Messiah. They did not understand all the prophecies that were given and were unable to harmonize some of them, like the promise of the glorious and unending reign of the Christ, with the picture of the suffering and dying servant of Jehovah. The perspective of prophecy and the *typical character* of so many events in the history of the divine revelation did not enable them to always grasp the pragmatism of history beforehand, and many prophecies were eventually fulfilled in a manner entirely different from what nearly every one expected. Thus likewise the general course of the future of

the Church of Christ and of the Kingdom of God has been indicated to us, but all detail is largely a matter of uncertainty.

2. *Early Expectations.*

Our Saviour himself, while on earth, appears to have generally spoken of the end of this "age" or world-period as *near at hand* (Matt. 16:28, 24:34); although there are some declarations of his recorded which imply a longer delay, such as that "the Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world, for a testimony unto all the nations, and then shall the end come," and, "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (Matt. 24:14 and Luke 21:24).

Accordingly, the apostolic writings, in general, looked forward to a near end. Paul, Peter and John, in their Epistles, expressed the hope of a *speedy return* of Christ; compare I Thess. 4:15, I Pet. 4:7 and I John 2:18. The Old Testament prophecies had connected the first and the second coming of the Messiah, or "the day of the Lord," so closely, that the intervening period was expected to be of short duration. Besides that, the persecutions which the early Christians experienced caused them to long very earnestly for a speedy deliverance from trouble. While the Apostle Paul, in his later Epistles, had become convinced that he at least would not live to see the return of Christ (II Tim. 4:6, 8), the book of *Revelation* again placed the fulfilment of the prophecies, the coming of Christ and the consummation of his kingdom, in the immediate future. (Rev. 1:7, 22:20, "He who testifieth these things saith, Yea: I come quickly. Amen, come, Lord Jesus.") This expectation was not altogether mistaken. According to the divinely arranged parallelism of historic events and the typical character of Biblical prophecy, both of the Old and New Testaments, the prophecies uttered find their *fulfilment* in a *succession* of events, which in point of time may be far apart, yet are parts of the same development. The destruction of Jerusalem and the victory of Christianity over the

hostile Roman world-power were a partial fulfilment of the expectation of the end of the world, and of the coming of Christ in his glory.

3. *The Millennium Idea.*

While the Christian Church was still suffering persecution, there arose the so-called Millennium expectation based upon Rev. 20:1-6, namely, that at the coming of Christ, the devil and the evil powers would be *bound* for a *thousand* years and Christ would establish a *kingdom on earth* which would last one thousand years. Among prominent church fathers, Irenaeus and Tertullian especially favored this expectation, while Origen and Clement of Alexandria opposed it. When the persecution ceased in the reign of Constantine, the interest in the Millennium waned. Augustine suggested, that the reign of Christ on earth had begun with the founding of the Christian Church and as the Church continued to grow in power, wealth and extension, the fondest hopes with regard to the kingdom of glory seemed to have a prospect of immediate fulfilment. Under the impression that the Millennium had actually commenced, fears were entertained that after the crusades it might come to an end.

The persecuted Christians of the middle ages, however, continued to wait for the coming of Christ as the time of the destruction of the anti-Christian powers and of the establishment of Christ's kingdom. The fact that, at the beginning of the *Reformation*, the Anabaptists revived the millennial hope in a somewhat fanatical manner, caused the Protestant Reformers to throw aside as unchristian the entire idea of a reign of Christ on earth and the Protestant creeds accordingly, as drawn up after the Reformation, have very little to say about the future of the Church.

It was *Spener*, the father of Pietism, the religious revival at the beginning of the eighteenth century, who again advocated the belief that *before* the return of Christ to this earth, there would come a time of great spiritual advance-

ment together with great general *prosperity*, a period, when the power of evil would be broken, when Israel as a nation would accept Christ as their Messiah and when the Gospel would have universal sway. The Würtemberg theologian and Bible student, *J. A. Bengel* (+1752), in his commentary on the book of Revelation, was the first to give a detailed statement of the prospective fulfilment of eschatological prophecy. He fixed the time of the coming of Antichrist for the years 1831-1836 and the beginning of the Millennium for 1836. The facts of history have proved that his chronology, at least, was an error. The first "*Adventists*" in America, the followers of William Miller, of Massachusetts, who believed that Christ would return to our earth in July of 1843, experienced the same disappointment.

3. *Objections to the Millennial Expectation.*

While the great majority of Christians in our day are indifferent to the question of a coming Millennium, there are still many devout and earnest believers who fervently hold to this hope. But they are divided into *postmillennial* and *premillennial* believers.

The former expect the Millennium to *precede Christ's return*, while the latter regard the coming of the Saviour as the necessary condition and preparation for the establishment of his kingdom. The *practical value* of the consideration of this question lies in the bearing which it has upon the immediate future of the Church and the cause of Christ. In the post-millennial theory the prospects for the general conversion of the world and the success of every effort for the advancement of Christ's kingdom are *bright*; we may expect an uninterrupted progress, victory after victory, until righteousness covers the earth as the waters cover the sea. In the pre-millennial view, the world at large will remain either *indifferent* or hostile to Christ. The revivals with which the Church is blessed here and there, do not mark the beginning of a general triumph of the kingdom of

God, but only temporary results which eventually will be overthrown in the great apostacy of the last times. Consequently all missionary work and all efforts for social and national reform can only have individual conversions and partial success in prospect.

There are great *difficulties* in the way of accepting the belief in a *literal* Millennium before or after the advent of Christ. *Against* a Millennium *before the coming* of Christ the following arguments are presented:

a. In the great prophetic discourse of Christ recorded in Matthew, it is distinctly stated, that when the Son of man comes, the world will be in the *same mood* as in the days of *Noah*, "eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and they knew not, until the flood came and took them all away; so shall be the coming of the Son of man" (Matt. 24:38, 39). We also read of persecutions of the children of God which will be brought to an end only by Christ's appearing, and of "Antichrist," the enemy of God's people, being destroyed at the coming of Christ (II Thess. 1:7, 8 and 2:8).

b. Christians are *exhorted* to *watch* for their Lord's return, which will not be known before hand, but "as a thief cometh in the night" or as the bridegroom after the virgins have fallen asleep (Matt. 24:42, 43 and 25:6). Such exhortation would be unnecessary, if a Millennium of spiritual prosperity preceded the second advent.

c. The fulfilment of prophecies which are generally referred to this earthly Millennium, would require such a *complete change* of the condition of the earth, such a regeneration, as would require a direct, and supernatural interposition of Christ.

On the other hand, there are equally strong arguments *against* the expectation of an earthly *Millennium after* Christ's coming:

a. Christ and St. Paul teach that, when Christ returns, the nations of the earth shall all be gathered before his *judgment* seat to receive their final sentence. Hence there

is no room for an earthly Millennium, based on present relations, after the judgment (Matt. 25:32, II Thess. 1:9, 10).

b. It seems inconceivable that during *Christ's reign* on earth, in the Millennium, *sinful* men shall continue to live and to multiply and heathen tribes remain unconverted. But if not, how shall we account for the appearance of "the nations, Gog and Magog, to gather together to the war; the number of whom is as the sand of the sea?" (Rev. 20:8).

In view of these arguments there seems to be very little ground for the expectation of a literal Millennium on earth, such as Rev. 20:1-7 is supposed to predict. While there are certain other Scripture passages that may be applied to an earthly, visible reign of Christ, such as Matt. 5:5, "they shall inherit the earth;" Luke 19:17, "have thou authority over ten cities;" Matt. 26:29, "that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom;" not one of these in itself requires a millennial interpretation. The Apostle John, the supposed writer of the book of Revelation, makes *no other mention* of the Millennium in the Gospel and the Epistles. This *obscure passage*, therefore, in one of the most figurative books of the Bible, must be interpreted by other and plainer statements. Closely examined, it does not teach a visible reign of Christ on earth, but may be interpreted as referring to an anticipation of eternal bliss enjoyed by the departed believers. That, however, does not exclude the idea, that before the course of the present world's history runs out there will be such a great advancement in knowledge, prosperity and enjoyment of divine blessings by all men, and that the cause of Christ may triumph over the powers of evil within and without in such a manner, as to make it possible to speak of an actual reign of Christ in his kingdom. But the event which the Church is directed to look for, is the coming of Christ rather than a Millennium.

4. *Is there a Twofold Bodily Resurrection?*

The passage of Rev. 20:5-6 is also frequently quoted as teaching a twofold resurrection from the dead, viz., first a

resurrection of the *saints*, which is to occur before the Millennium, and a *general resurrection* of the rest of the dead, after the Millennium. There are some other statements of Scripture which can be understood in the same sense, but do not by themselves require this interpretation. Such are Luke 14:14, "Thou shalt be recompensed in the resurrection of the just;" I Thess. 4:16, "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout... and the dead in Christ shall rise first;" Phil. 3:11, "If by any means I may attain unto the resurrection out of the dead (ἐξανάστασις)," and I Cor. 15:22-23, "As in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive; but each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, then they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end."

Over against these few passages, however, we have the frequent and definite declarations of one *universal resurrection*, both of the godly and ungodly, *e. g.*, John 5:28, 29 and 6:40, "Marvel not at this; for the hour cometh, in which all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice and shall come forth, they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment." The seemingly different statements quoted before, are easily harmonized with this declaration, "The dead in Christ shall rise first," is not in antithesis to a later resurrection, but as the context shows, it states that the dead shall "first" rise before the living are changed. Likewise in I Cor. 15:22, there is no reference to a second resurrection of the ungodly, in the words "then the end," but to Christ delivering the kingdom to God the Father. In short, a twofold bodily resurrection is not anywhere in the new Testament distinctly taught, unless Rev. 20:5 and 6 is taken literally and not interpreted as referring to a spiritual quickening.

However, the remarkable statement in Matt. 27:52, 53, that at the time of Christ's resurrection on Easter day, "the tombs were opened; and many bodies of the saints that had fallen asleep were raised, and coming forth out of the

tombs, after his resurrection, they entered into the holy city and appeared unto many," indicates the belief that some of the departed may rise in *anticipation* of the general resurrection; and there is no positive reason against such a belief.

CHAPTER XLIX. FINAL EVENTS AND THE COMING OF CHRIST.

1. *Certainty of Christ's Return.*

Whatever opinion may be held with regard to "the Millennium," it is certain that the New Testament teaches a *visible* and glorious *return* of Christ to this earth. The Evangelists report that the Saviour, especially in his parting discourses to the disciples, gave them repeated assurances of his coming again (Luke 17:24; 21:27) and that at Christ's ascension they heard a heavenly message to this effect, that "this Jesus who was received up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye beheld him going into heaven" (Acts 1:11). This is the *great fact* toward which the whole New Testament looks. It appears already on the horizon of the Old Testament prophecy, in such passages as Zech. 14:1-4 and 12:10; Dan. 7:13, 14, but not clearly distinguished from other typical advents of the Lord.

The actual bodily return of Christ is *doubted* by those who claim that the announced coming (*παρουσία*) means nothing more than the spiritual "presence" of Christ, since his ascension. Christ does come to the individual when he calls him home by the angel of death, he came to the circle of disciples on Pentecost, by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, he came at the destruction of Jerusalem by sending the Roman eagles and he has come since, often times, bringing salvation or judgment to the world and the Church; but these partial and typical comings are to be concluded by a final and perfect self-manifestation of the God-man.

Whatever actual progress has been made and is being made in the establishment of the kingdom of God here on

earth, in "overcoming evil with good" in national, social and personal advancement, the evident limitations and incompleteness of human attainments call for the *second advent* of Christ, to bring the imperfect to perfection and to give to the ideal of human development its full realization. It is necessary also, that the *glory* and dominion of the Redeemer shall be universally manifested on this *earth* which has witnessed his deepest humiliation, and that the king shall hold a triumphant entrance into his kingdom, after it has been fully established. The apostolic writing, therefore, urges the second coming of Christ upon the attention of Christian people as a motive to *patience, joy* and *holy living*, and an event which should be an object of longing expectation, because it will not only bring back their Lord whom they love, to be seen with their own eyes, but with him also will bring their full redemption (James 5:8, Heb. 9:28).

2. *Antichrist.*

Christ's coming, according to the testimony of the apostles, will be preceded by the appearing of Antichrists. This term itself, meaning both a usurper of the name of Christ and an enemy of Christ, occurs only in the Epistles of John, but reference to the Antichrist is made already in Matt. 24:24. The word is used to designate both a *tendency* and a *person*. It is first an *antichristian spirit* which we are told, will manifest itself particularly in the last times. For John writes (I John 2:18, 22), "Little children, it is the last hour; and as ye heard that antichrist cometh, even now have there arisen many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last hour....Who is the liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, even he that denieth the father and the son;" and Paul testifies in I Tim. 4:1, "The Spirit saith expressly, that in later times some shall fall away from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons, through the hypocrisy of men that speak lies."

But the same apostle speaks of a special, *personal* manifestation of this antichristian spirit in some man who will be a complete incarnation of evil, "the man of sin, the son of perdition, he that opposeth and exalteth himself against all that is called God or that is worshipped; so that he sitteth in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God" (II Thess. 2:3, 4). The apostle must have had some one definitely in mind whose coming he expected in the near future, as he writes: "The mystery of lawlessness doth already work: only there is one that restraineth now, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall be revealed the lawless one, whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of his mouth and bring to naught by the manifestation of his coming" (II Thess. 2:7, 8).

These words, in connection with the prophecy in Daniel about the "little horn" and the man "who shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every God" (Dan. 7:25 and 11:36), and in connection with certain apocalyptic visions in the book of Revelation, have excited the attention of Bible readers and Christians in general, throughout all the centuries of the Christian era. The general opinion was for a long time, that *the Antichrist* would be some prominent man, in Church or State, and successive centuries found personalities that fitted their ideas of the character and action of the Antichrist; among them particularly some of the popes. The Reformers of the sixteenth century, almost without exception, applied the term not to any one individual but to the papacy, as a power that, as they declared, was supported "by lying wonders, persecuting the saints and sitting in the temple of God, as a God." Later, the combination presented in the vision of the seventeenth chapter of Revelation, of a woman sitting on a beast with ten horns, was interpreted as indicating, that the Antichrist would be both an ecclesiastical and a secular power. The woman should stand for the apostate Church, the beast which at first supports and then hates the woman (Rev. 19),

should represent the antichristian state persecuting the Church, either in despotism or anarchy.

Looking at the past, without passing judgment upon any particular persons or representatives, we may well say that antichristian *powers* have been at work, both without and within the Church, manifesting themselves in a bitter hatred of every thing Christian and sometimes in a bigotry which makes a false pretence of religion. We must expect such antichristian manifestations to continue to the end of this Christian dispensation and perhaps, as during the time of the earthly ministry of Christ, showing itself again more in open hostility or in one and another kind of demoniacal *possession*. It may well be that, as we read of Judas that Satan entered into him, taking full possession of his spirit, so there may be some man in whom sin and the devil will become so *impersonated*, as to make him a Satan revealed in human form; just as in Jesus Christ the true God was made manifest to men. As in Christ, the mediator between God and man, redeemed humanity has been reunited with God, so, it may be, those who serve sin and the devil will, by this incarnation of Satan, become fully identified with him unto judgment.

3. *Universal Proclamation of the Gospel.*

On the other hand, we have a word from Christ himself saying, that the end shall not come until the Gospel has first been proclaimed in every land and to *every people*, as it is written in Matt. 24:14: "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world, for a testimony unto all the nations; and then shall the end come." That does not say, that all the heathen will be christianized or all the Mohammedans individually shall accept Christ as their Saviour; but the proclamation is to be made everywhere and to all mankind for a testimony, either unto salvation or unto condemnation. By the commission given to the Church: "Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations," it has become a solemn duty and a precious

privilege for Christian people to help the Mission cause and thus to hasten the day when Christ shall return, because "the kingdom of the world *is* become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ and he shall reign forever and ever" (Rev. 11:15).

The general christianization of the world, naturally, includes the *conversion* of the *Jews*, as Paul declares in Rom. 11:25, 27, "A hardening in part hath befallen Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in and so all Israel shall be saved, even as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the deliverer; He shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: and this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins." In accord with this expectation, we have Christ's own prediction: "Your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord" (Matt. 23:39).

As to the *future* of the *Hebrew race* in general and their relation to the final establishment of Christ's kingdom, various ideas have been expressed, such as: *a.* The Jews will be *converted* to Christ and then be *restored* to Palestine, there to live, a chosen people of God, as of old. *b.* They will return to Palestine *unconverted*, restore the Old Testament ritual and become the foremost nation of the earth. *c.* There will be *no* such general *return* and no restoration of the Hebrew nation as such. The converted Jews will be merged into the Christian Church, as in the days of the apostles and since.

If in the attempt of forecasting the future, the *New Testament* is taken as a guide, we shall find very little that would point to any lasting prerogative of the Jews as a chosen race. St. Paul, notwithstanding his emphasizing the exalted mission of the Hebrews in the past, sees the glory of the gospel dispensation in the very fact that in the kingdom of Christ there shall be no distinction between Jew and Gentile (Rom. 4:16, 17, Gal 5:6). The children of God are the seed of Abraham and the true Israel (Rom. 9:8,

Ephes. 2:14, 19) ; the Gentile believers are built up, together with the Jews, into one spiritual temple of God. It should be noted, that the Apocalypse, which otherwise has so much of the Old Testament coloring, has remarkably little to say about a special future of the Jews (compare chap. 7:14, etc.).

The impression is different when we turn to the *Old Testament* prophecy. While it has been customary, for a long time, to understand and to interpret all the prophecies fortelling the restoration of Israel as applying to the Christian Church and her spiritual glory, the obvious impression produced by many of these predictions is that they refer to the future of the Hebrew race. Some of the leading passages here are: Isa. 11:11-16 and 61:4-6; 66:19, 20; Jerem. 31:38-40; Ezek. 36:24-28; 37:24-25; Amos 9:11-15. Some of these predictions, no doubt, have been fulfilled by the return of the Jews from the Babylonish exile, some in the days of the Maccabees and in the days of the founding of the Christian Church. Some are being fulfilled at the present day. A literal fulfilment, however, of the remainder would seem to imply the rebuilding of the temple and the restoration of the *Old Testament ritual*, contrary to the truth that there is no further need of sacrifices. Besides, Israel's restoration in several passages is represented in connection with a condition of affairs which no longer exists and with a reference to neighbors, like the Philistines and Edomites, that makes a literal fulfilment impossible. Again, a lasting superiority of the remnant of the Hebrew race would mean an exaltation of that portion of Israel which *hardened* itself against the Gospel and thus remained separate, while the best portion of the ancient covenant people, all those who in the course of centuries accepted Christ, have become identified with the Gentile Church and the Christian people.

On the other hand, a *special future* for the Jews as a nation is not excluded. If in the early days of the Christian era the Greeks and Romans, and later the Germans and Anglo-Saxons have been given the position at the head of

all Christian nations, it cannot be deemed impossible, that the converted people of Israel may yet come to hold a place among the Gentiles similar to that which it occupied of old (compare Acts 3:20, 21 and 1:6, 7); not, indeed, in the sense of being a mediator of salvation to the others, but by developing the special gifts and graces which seem to be entrusted to this people. Recent events have made the fulfilment of certain Old Testament prophecies to that effect not improbable.

4. *The Coming of Christ.*

Apparently at an *unexpected* time, Christ will come to this earth, visibly and bodily. He told his disciples: "As the lightning cometh forth from the east, and is seen even unto the west, so shall be the coming of the Son of man" (Matt. 24:27). Christians are urged to watch for his appearing, because the day and the hour will not be known beforehand. "Be ye also ready: for in an hour that ye think not the Son of man cometh" (Luke 12:40). At the same time we are told, that when Christ comes this fact will at once be known to all (Luke 17:24). He will come in his kingly *glory*. The risen saints will come with him and the believers on earth, as Paul tells us, will be "changed," so as to be made ready to meet their glorified Lord. This is the general prospect of the coming of the Lord, his "parousia," manifestation or revelation, as the apostles call it.

As to the manner of his coming, we read in Matt. 24:30, "And then shall appear the *sign* of the *Son of man* in heaven! and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn and they shall see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." The sign of the Son of man has been interpreted by some to be the star of Bethlehem which the Magi saw, or the light cloud (Shechina) which marked Jehovah's presence at Israel's sanctuary, or the figure of the cross, or finally the mark of the pierced side on Christ's person, because of Zechariah 12:10 and

John 19, "They shall look on him whom they pierced." However, this as well as *other signs* mentioned in connection with the coming of Christ, such as "flaming fire, the trump of God and the voice of the archangel" (I and II Thess.), must for the present remain hieroglyphs, for the proper understanding of which the key is still wanting.

CHAPTER L. THE END OF THIS WORLD AND THE FINAL DESTINY OF ALL.

1. *Regeneration of the Earth.*

With the coming of Christ and the end of the present dispensation, the earth also which we inhabit shall, in its present state at least, come to an end. It will not be destroyed or annihilated, but regenerated and *transformed*, like the human body. In II Pet. 3:7, 10, we are taught, that "the heavens that now are and the earth have been stored up for *fire*, being reserved against the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men, . . . and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up." But the same letter adds: "According to his promise, we look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (II Pet. 3:13). What, according to the teachings of geology, has happened in the past, may happen again in the future, viz., an overthrow of the surface of the earth resulting in a transformation at least of this planet. As we are taught, that this present world of ours has become involved in the consequences of the Fall of Adam, it is but rational to expect, that it will likewise share in the *redemption* of the human race. That is what Paul anticipated in Rom. 8:20, 21, when he says: "For the creation was subjected to vanity, not of its own will, but by reason of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God." In Christ's discourse, as

recorded in Matt. 19:28, it is called a regeneration or *new birth*, and Peter speaks of a “restoration of all things.” Who knows, but that this renovated or regenerated earth may be a part of that kingdom which has been prepared for God’s people “from the foundation of the world?” (Matt. 25:34.)

2. *The Question of Universal Restoration.*

With the end of our present world, the eternal age begins. Here the question recurs, whether the consummation of all things and the complete establishment of the kingdom of God does not also imply a universal *restoration* of all fallen creatures, to the state of happiness and holiness. Hopes to that effect have been expressed from the days of Origen to the present time, the Universalists making it the prominent feature of their teaching, that at last all creatures, however sinful they may be, whether men or devils, shall be purged from guilt and enter into the mansions of the blessed.

The main *arguments* in *support* of this belief are:

a. If the evil, and sin, did not exist from the beginning, they *cannot last forever*. Man created in the image of God cannot forever persist in sinning; he must eventually return to his creator. But consider, that sin as well as righteousness are not mere natural attributes and qualities, but are personal matters. The freedom of choice which is the essential characteristic of humanity and the essence of holiness, involves the possibility of a permanent choosing of evil on the part of the creature.

b. It is thought *irreconcilable* with the *love* and *justice* of God, that any creature should be condemned forever. Sins committed in time can only be punished within the limit of time, not by an endless penalty; and shall not the Almighty and all-loving Father finally overcome all sinful resistance of the creatures, so as to reconcile them to Himself? But, according to Scripture, those who will be finally condemned are those who have become wholly identified with sin. Hence God’s holy love, being an absolute hatred of sin, can but

consume the sinner who definitely rejects the salvation that was offered. "Eternal punishment" then is not so much punishment for sins committed in the past, as the vindication and manifestation of God's holiness toward continued sin and wickedness.

c. Again, it is urged that the existence of the condemned will be *incompatible* with the *happiness* of the blessed. To know that any one should be in torment who was related by ties of blood or bonds of friendship, would mar the felicity of the children of God. However, with them who inherit the future kingdom, earthly relations and affections certainly can continue only so far as the spiritual connection remains. The holy affection of the saints in glory, like God's own love, can feel no sympathy for sin and for those who are openly declared the enemies of God. (See I Cor. 16:22.)

d. Finally, there are certain *declarations of Scripture*, especially in the Epistles of Paul, which appear to favor a final salvation of all, such as Col. 1:19, 20, "It was the good pleasure of the Father . . . through him to reconcile all things unto himself;" Rom. 11:32, "For God hath shut up all unto disobedience, that he might have mercy upon all;" Phil. 2:10, "That in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord." But these passages clearly give the objective aspect of unlimited salvation, not the subjective use and the outcome from it.

On the other hand the scriptural testimony *against the belief* in a universal restoration of sinful creatures is positive and *conclusive*. Not so much in the Old as in the New Testament, after the love and mercy of God have been fully revealed in the giving of his only begotten son for the redemption of the world, is the awful danger of eternal condemnation of the sinner most clearly set forth. Not to Paul and Peter, but to Christ the *Saviour himself* are attributed the most solemn warnings of Matt. 25:41, 46, "Depart from

me ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels; . . . and these shall go away into eternal punishment;" and Mark 9:47, 48, "It is good for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell, where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." Note, furthermore, the testimony concerning the sin against the Holy Spirit which "shall not be forgiven, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come" (Matt. 12:32), and the declaration concerning Judas: "Good were it for that man if he had not been born" (Matt. 26:24). If any one contends that the Greek word for *eternal* (*αἰώνιος*), strictly speaking, means only "age-long" and that in Heb. 9:26 we read of the "end of the ages," we must reply, that the same word certainly is used to express the duration of the happiness of the blessed (Matt. 25:46) and the eternal existence of God himself.

3. *The Question of Annihilation.*

If the revealed Word forbids the assumption of the final restoration of the wicked, may we look forward to a time when all that is evil will be annihilated? In *favor* of an affirmative reply to this question, the following arguments can be presented:

a. *Scripture passages* like I Cor. 15:26, 28, "The last enemy that shall be abolished is death; . . . that God may be all in all," as implying that, if the world's history is not to continue in disharmony, the evil must be annihilated.

b. After an adequate retribution has overtaken the wicked, their further existence seems *without purpose*.

c. Endless existence of a creature cut off from the source of life, which is God, seems *impossible*. If eternal life is an ever increasing manifestation of the divine power given to the children of God, must not eternal death end in the extinction of being for the ungodly? d. If the essence of human existence lies in *individual consciousness* and in personal morality, will not the loss of these be a virtual annihilation of being? If so many men already in this

present life, through vice or self-indulgence, seem to have lost their individual and moral consciousness, will not the "second death" (Rev. 21:8) of these mean the dissolution of the soul itself?

Whatever weight the foregoing considerations and arguments may have with regard to personal convictions or hopes, they do not avail for setting aside the *emphatic declarations* of Scripture, which warn the sinner against incurring the penalty of eternal punishment. It is a proper part of the preaching of the Gospel, to declare the doctrine of eternal punishment, not as the highest motive but yet as an important motive for the renunciation of sin and for accepting the Saviour, as Jude writes: "On some have mercy, who are in doubt and some save, snatching them out of the fire" (v. 23). The preaching which ignores the fear of future condemnation, lowers the holiness of God and the value of the redeeming work of Christ, who suffered and died to save from sin.

We are exhorted to give "the more diligence to make our calling and election sure" (II Pet. 1:10) and to work out our "own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who worketh in you both to will and to work, for his good pleasure" (Phil. 2:12, 13). As for the rest, we have the assurance that the love and wisdom of God manifested in Christ through the Holy Spirit will leave nothing undone, to save all who want to be saved.

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